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THE WRITINGS OF

PROSPER MÉRIMÉE

COMPRISING HIS

NOVELS, TALES, AND LETTERS TO AN UNKNOWN

WITH

An Essay on the Genius and Achievement of the Author

By GEORGE SAINTSBURY, M.A.

COMPLETE IN EIGHT VOLUMES

THE NOVELS, TALES AND LETTERS
OF
PROSPER MÉRIMÉE

EDITED BY PROF. [illegible] SAINTSBURY, M.A.

[illegible]

LETTERS TO AN UNKNOWN

II

Translated by
OLIVE EDWARDS PALMER

Illustrated with
Contemporary Drawings and
Portraits

NEW YORK [illegible] PHILADELPHIA

MCMVI

The "Carré" Sainte-Genevieve, Paris, where Mérimée was born, September 28, 1803.

Etched from a recent drawing.

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LETTERS TO AN UNKNOWN

CLXX

PARIS, *September 8, 1857.*

WHILE you are devoting yourself to the cultivation of enthusiasm, I continue to cough, and am very ill with a frightful cold. I hope you will be touched by this. I do not understand why you should remain three days in Lucerne, unless you spend your time on the lake. But it is useless to give you advice which will reach you too late. My only word of admonition, and one, I trust, by which you will profit, is not to forget your friends in France, in the beautiful country you are now visiting.

There is positively not a soul in Paris, but I am not averse to the solitude. I am spending my evenings comfortably enough, doing nothing. If I were not feeling really miserable, I should find this quiet extremely pleasant, and I should like it to continue the whole year. The

surprises which you encounter in your travels must be amusing, and it is a source of regret to me that I am unable to witness them. If you had exercised a little strategy in arranging your plans, we might have met somewhere in the course of your journey and made an excursion or two together, and caught a glimpse of some chamois or, at any rate, some black squirrels.

Were I not so ill that it is impossible to form two consecutive ideas, I should take advantage of your absence in order to work. I have a promise to fulfil with the *Revue des Deux Mondes,* and a *Life of Brantôme* to write, in which I have quantities of rash things to say. It amuses me to arrange and rearrange the sentences in my mind, but when it comes to the point of leaving my easy-chair and of going to my desk to put them on paper, my courage fails me. I am sorry you did not take with you a volume of Beyle on Italy, for it would have entertained you on the way, and it would have given you, besides, some knowledge of social conditions there. Beyle was especially fond of Milan, because it was there he fell in love. I have never been there, but I have never cared for the Milanese whom I have met, for they have always reminded me of French provincials.

In Venice, if you should come across any old Latin book from the printing-house of Aldus, with a wide margin, if it does not cost too much, buy it for me. You will recognise it by the letters in italics, and by the trade-mark, which is a unicorn wrestling with a dolphin. Travelling with such a large party as you are, I fancy you will write to me very seldom. You might, however, grant me the delight of an occasional letter, and give me renewed patience, for, as you are aware, I do not possess your virtue.

Good-bye. Enjoy yourself, and see as many beautiful things as you can, but do not conceive the idea of seeing everything. You must say to yourself, "I shall return." Your memory will always be stored with reminiscences enough to keep you from being dull. I should like to ride in a gondola with you. Once more good-bye. Above all things, take care of yourself, and do not overtire.

CLXXI

AIX, *January 6, 1858.*

And so you imagine that tree-trunks grow like those in bracelets, and that the silversmiths will understand your comparisons! I purchased something that resembles a collection of mush-

rooms, but the price was somewhat disconcerting. Did you shop in Genoa? I doubt it, otherwise you would have bought something. But no matter. You did not know, perhaps, that there is a duty on filigree work of eleven francs a hectogram, for which reason it costs in France twice as much as in Genoa. Notwithstanding, I have resolved to pay nothing to the customs, and to leave to you the pleasure of sending on the duty money, which will be inserted in the *Moniteur* as a restitution to the Government.

It is freezing, snowing, and atrociously cold. I do not know whether it will be possible to go to Burgundy; at all events, I shall start for Paris to-morrow night. I hope that you will come in person to wish me a happy New Year.

Good-bye. I am tired out from the journey, and depressed from the weather. I met at Nice all sorts of smart people, among others the Duchesse de Sagan, who is perennially young, and as audacious as ever.

CLXXII

PARIS, *Monday evening, January 20, 1858.*

It is a century since I saw you. 'Tis true that many things have happened in the interval. I

am consumed with the wish to know what you think of it all. My cold and influenza are somewhat improved, and the credit of my cure I attribute to our last walk. It is not unlike the lance of Achilles.

Have you read *Doctor Antonio?* It is an English novel which has achieved no little success among English fashionable society, and which I read while at Cannes. It is the work of M. Orsini. There will be, no doubt, a new edition in London, and you must read it. To tell the truth, it is not very clever.

Write to me soon, I pray you, for I need to see you to make me forget all the miseries of this world.

CLXXIII

LONDON, *British Museum, Tuesday night, April 28, 1858.*

Time flies so rapidly in this country, and the distances are so enormous, that one does not accomplish the half of what he wishes. I have just been through the Museum with the duc de Malakoff, and there are but a few minutes left to write to you. I must tell you in the first place, that for two days I was really very ill, an effect always produced on me by breathing coal

smoke. Since then, however, I have felt entirely made over. I eat ravenously, and walk a great deal, but I do not sleep as much as I should like. I am in society constantly, which I do not enjoy any too well. Crinoline is not worn here as universally as it is with us; but so quickly do one's eyes become accustomed to fashions, that I am scandalised, and the women all look as if they were dressed up in chemises.

You can have no conception of the beauty of the British Museum on Sunday, when there is absolutely no one there but M. Panizzi and me. There is about it a marvellous atmosphere of devotion; only one fears that the statues may all descend from their pedestals and begin to dance the polka.

I discover here not the slightest feeling of animosity against us. The general sentiment is that Bernard* was sentenced by small tradesmen, and that it is not extraordinary that a tradesman should embrace every occasion to harass a prince. The *Maréchal*† was cheered tremendously when he arrived.

Good-bye, dear friend.

* Implicated in the Orsini affair. The French Government requested his extradition, which England refused to grant.

† Marshal Pélissier, the duc de Malakoff.

CLXXIV

LONDON, *British Museum, May 3, 1858.*

I shall be in Paris, I think, on Wednesday morning.

I fell, last Wednesday, into a pretty kettle of fish. I was invited to a dinner of the Literary Fund, presided over by Lord Palmerston, and just as I was starting, received notice that, inasmuch as my name had been placed opposite a toast on the literature of Continental Europe, I must be prepared to make a speech. I yielded, with the pleasure that you may imagine, and for a long quarter of an hour talked nonsense in bad English, to an assembly of three hundred men of letters, or so-called such, and more than a hundred women, admitted to the honor of observing us eat tough chicken and leathery tongue. I was never so surfeited with silliness, as M. de Pourceaugnac said.

I received a visit yesterday from a lady and her husband, who brought me some autograph letters from the emperor Napoleon to Josephine, which they wished to sell. They are very singular, for their entire subject is love. They are perfectly authentic, being written on stamped paper and bearing the post-marks. What I fail to understand is why Josephine

did not burn them as soon as she had read them. . . .

CLXXV

PARIS, *May 19, 1858.*

We are compelled to lead a tiresome existence at the Luxembourg. I am worn out with it, and I am dismayed, also, at the weather; I am told that it is good for the pease. I congratulate you, therefore, but it seems to me that the rain should fall only on the farms. I have been accusing you strongly of having taken one of my books—they are my sole possession—for which I have searched as if it were a needle. I discovered it finally, this morning, in a corner where I had hid it myself for safe-keeping; but it caused me more irritation than the book was worth.

I have been ill ever since my return—that is to say, I can neither eat nor sleep. Before you leave for so long a time, I must positively make a second portrait of you. For that, it is a question only of a half hour of patience, if patience is needed when one realises that one is giving people pleasure. I am to be in the party to go to Fontainebleau, and shall not return before the 29th. I wish we might have a long talk before I go. It seems a century since that has happened with us.

CLXXVI

FONTAINEBLEAU PALACE, *May 20, 1858.*

. . . I am dreadfully cross, and half-poisoned from having taken an over-dose of laudanum. I have, besides, composed some verses for his Netherland Majesty, played charades, and made a fool of myself. This is why I am absolutely stupefied.

What shall I tell you of the life which we lead here? We went on a deer hunt yesterday, and ate our dinner on the grass. The other day we were drenched by the rain, and I took cold. Every day we eat too much, and I am half dead. Destiny did not intend me for a courtier.

I should love to walk with you in this beautiful forest and talk of fairy scenes. I have such a headache that I can not see a thing. I am going to take a nap before the fatal hour when I must get into my armour—that is to say, into skin-tight trousers. . . .

CLXXVII

PARIS, *June 14, 1858—At Night.*

I have just found your letter here on my return from the country, where I visited my cousin in order to tell him good-bye. I am more

desolate to know that you are so far away than I was to leave you. The sight of the trees and the fields have recalled our walks. I felt sure, moreover, and had a presentiment that you would not go so soon, and that I should see you once more, so that the post-mark on your letter vexed me extremely.

I am irritated even more by your prudish ridicule, and by all you say concerning that book. It has the misfortune to be badly written—that is, in an emphatic style which Sainte-Beuve praises by calling poetic. So diverse are tastes! It contains sensible statements, and it is not flippant. When one has as much good taste as you, you should not exclaim that it is frightful, that it is immoral; you should realise that what is good in the book is very good. Never judge of things with your prejudices. Every day you become more prudish and more conformed to conventionality. I can forgive you for wearing crinoline, but I can not forgive you for prudishness. You must learn how to recognise the good where it exists.

Another cause of chagrin against you is that I do not possess your last portrait. It is your fault, for I have frequently asked you for it. You pretend that it does not resemble you, while I insist that it has that expression of countenance

which I have seen on no woman but you, and which I have often recalled in my mind's eye. The day of my departure is not certain, but I shall endeavour to be in Lucerne about the 20th, in which event I shall leave the 19th. 'Tis needless to say that I shall expect to hear from you before that date. It is frightfully warm here, on account of which I am unable to eat or to sleep.

Good-bye. Before leaving, I shall inform you where you must write to me. I am in no mood to say pleasant things. I am very displeased with you, but, as usual, I must forgive you in the end. Try to keep well and do not catch cold in the cool of the evening.

Good-bye again, dear friend; it is a word which always saddens me.

CLXXVIII

INTERLAKEN, *July 3, 1858.*

I have come out of the eternal snows, and upon my arrival here find your letter. You do not give your address at G...., and yet it seems to me that it is at that place I should write to you. I hope you will have the wit to go to the post-office, or that the post-office will have the

wit to carry the letter to you. To the present time our travels have been favoured by the weather. We had rain nowhere but at the Grimsel, which compelled us to spend two nights in that magnificent funnel. The journey had its difficulties. There was a great deal of snow, and it continued to fall. I had a tumble into a hole with my horse; but we pulled ourselves out without other inconvenience than rather too much coolness for an hour or two. A Yankee lady whom we met made at the same spot a picturesque somersault. I am sun-blistered, and my skin is peeling from my forehead to my neck.

I have visited the glacier of the Rhone, which I do not advise you to do; nevertheless, it is the most beautiful place I have seen up to the present time. I have made a fairly accurate sketch of it, which I will show you. I shall hope to meet you in Vienna in October. It is an attractive city, containing some Roman ruins which I shall have the pleasure of explaining to you and of revisiting in your society.

Give me your commissions for Venice. I have not determined by which route I shall go to Innsbruck, whether by Lake Constance, or through Lindau, or perhaps Munich; but I shall certainly pass through Innsbruck, for I am to go to Venice by way of Trent, and not by vul-

gar Splugen. Write to me, therefore, at Innspruck without dilly-dallying too long about it. . . .

CLXXIX

INNSPRUCK, *July 25, 1858.*

I arrived here last night, where I found your letter of ancient date. . . .

My itinerary has changed altogether. After having travelled entirely through the Oberland, I went to Zurich. There I was seized with the desire to see Salzburg, and I crossed over Lake Constance to Lindau, and thence to Munich, where I lingered several days visiting the museum.

Salzburg seems to me to deserve its reputation, by which I mean its German reputation. Happily, to most tourists it is an unknown country. Near by there is a mountain called the Gagsberg, standing in almost the same position as the Righi, from which one sees spread before him the same panorama of lakes and mountains. The lakes are poor affairs, to be sure, but the mountains are infinitely more splendid than those surrounding the Righi. Add to this the fact that there are no English tourists to bore you with their faces, and that you are in the midst of the most absolute solitude, knowing to

a certainty—which is an important consideration—that at the end of a three hours' walk you will enjoy a good dinner at Salzburg.

I went yesterday into the Zitterthal, which is a charming valley, one end of which is inclosed by a great glacier. The mountains to the right and the left rise sharply before you, which is the same inconvenience that one suffers in Switzerland: there is no foreground, no means of determining the real height of surrounding objects.

In the Zitterthal, it is said, are the most beautiful women of the Tyrol. I saw, indeed, many very pretty ones there, but they were too well fed. Their legs, which they show to the garter (it is not as high as you might imagine), are of startling bigness. While I was dining at Fügen, our host entered the room, with his daughter, formed like a cask of Burgundy, his son, a guitar, and two stable-boys. All these people yodeled in a marvellous fashion. The cask, who was but twenty-two years old, has a contralto voice worth fifty thousand francs. For all that, the concert was free. Singing, with these people, is a pleasure, which they do not include in the bill.

To-morrow I start for Verona by a roundabout way in order to see Stelvio. I shall have to travel in a coach seven or eight thousand feet above sea level. If I do not fall into some hole,

I shall be in Venice by the 5th or 6th of August, perhaps before then. I shall attend to your commission, which seems to me intricate. I shall choose for you the prettiest hair-net possible to find. I thank you for your information concerning Aldus. I should have preferred, however, that you should give me some about your travels. Good-bye.

CLXXX

VENICE, *August 18, 1858.*

You have been roving over the mountains, making unseemly comparisons of Mont Blanc with a loaf of sugar, while I was working myself to death searching for gimcracks for you. I have never seen anything uglier than the things I am bringing you. It is probable that they will be seized by the custom-houses which I must encounter, or else that they will be smashed on the journey. I rejoice at this possibility, for never was such a commission given to a man of taste.

Venice had a most depressing effect on me, from which feeling I have been unable to rally for nearly two weeks. The architecture is convincing, but lacking in taste and imagination. It has made me indignant to recall the commonplaces written about some of the palaces. The

canals bear a striking resemblance to the Bièvre River, and the gondolas to an incommodious hearse. The pictures of the Academy pleased me, although none were above the rank of second-rate works. There is not a Paul Veronese to be compared to *The Marriage at Cana,* not a Titian comparable to *Caesar's Coin,* in Dresden, or even *The Crown of Thorns* in Paris. I searched for a Giorgione, but there was not one in Venice.

On the other hand, I found the faces of the people attractive. The streets swarm with charming young girls, barefooted and bareheaded, who, if they were bathed and scrubbed, would be Venuses Anadyomenes. What I dislike above all else is the odor in the streets. On certain days the air was full of the smell of fritters frying, and it was insupportable.

I attended a *funzione* in honor of the Archduke, and found it very entertaining. He was given a serenade from the Piazzetta to the iron bridge. Six hundred gondolas followed the colossal boat containing the music. Every one carried lanterns, and many burned red or blue Bengal lights, which threw on the palaces of the Grand Canal tints of fairy-like hue. The passage of the Rialto was extremely amusing. No one could turn around or withdraw from his place, and the result was that for an hour and a

quarter the entire space between the Loredan palace and the Rialto was an immovable bridge. The instant a crevice as wide as one's hand appeared between two sterns a prow slipped into it like a coin. Every instant was heard the cracking of planks, and now and then the cracking of an oar. It is most extraordinary that in all this throng, which, in France would be the occasion of a free-for-all scrimmage, not an oath was heard, not even a word of ill-humour. These people are a compound of milk and maize. I saw yesterday, in Saint-Mark's Place, a monk fall on his knees before an Austrian corporal who obstructed his way. I have never seen anything so distressing, and in full view of the Lion of Saint-Mark, too!

I am waiting here for Panizzi. I go in society sometimes. I visit the libraries and spend my time in a tolerably agreeable way. I saw yesterday the Armenians, and very handsome chaps they are, whom the mere sight of a senator transformed into Armenians from Constantinople. They presented me with an epic poem by one of their Fathers.

Good-bye. I shall reach Genoa, probably, the 1st of September, and Paris certainly in October. I shall go to Vienna as soon as I have heard from you. For the last few days I have

been fairly well, but for more than a fortnight I was miserably ill. Good-bye again.

CLXXXI

GENOA, *September 10, 1858.*

On my arrival here I found your letter of the 1st, which I acknowledge gratefully. You make no mention of one which I wrote you from Brescia about the first of this month. In it I said that I had left Venice with regret, and that I was thinking of you constantly.

Lake Como was charming. I stopped at Bellagio. In a little villa by the lake shore I found Madame Pasta, whom I had not seen since the days of her triumphs in the Italian Opera. She has increased singularly in width. She is now cultivating her cabbages, and says she is as happy as when we used to throw crowns and sonnets to her. We talked of music, the drama, and she said something that struck me as very true, which was that since Rossini no one had written an opera of any unity, of which all the parts held together. All that Verdi and his associates have done resembles a harlequin's costume.

The weather is magnificent, and this evening the boat leaves for Leghorn. I am tempted strongly to go to Florence for a week, returning

by way of Genoa, and probably by the Corniche. If, however, I should receive any letters of importance, I might take the Turin route, and reach Paris in thirty hours. In any case, I shall expect to see you there October 1st. Be kind enough not to forget, or you will put me to the necessity of going to search for you along your sea-shore.

You say nothing about Grenoble spinach, or the fifty-three ways of serving it, customary in Dauphiny. Is any one left who used to know Beyle? I received some time ago a very witty letter, full of anecdotes about him, from a man whose name I have forgotten, but who, I believe, is registrar of the Imperial Court. Formerly, there was still some sense of humour in the provinces, as in the period of the president *de Brosses;* now, however, not even an idea is to be found there. The railroads are hastening the process of mental paralysis, and I am confident that, in twenty years from now, reading will be a lost art. . . .

CLXXXII

CANNES, *October 8, 1858.*

Your gimcracks have arrived here without accident. I shall be in Paris next Wednesday or Thursday. When you want your trinkets, you

can come and get them. I returned from Florence by land, and am glad to have decided on that route. After leaving Spezzia the scenery is magnificent, as fine, if not finer, than that found from Genoa to Nice. I am bringing with me a lovely souvenir of Florence. It is a beautiful city. Venice is only pretty. As for works of art, there is no comparison possible. In Florence there are two unexcelled museums.

When you visit Pisa, I would advise you to stop at the Hôtel de la Grand Bretagne. It is the perfection of comfort. I committed the egregious folly, on the recommendation of a Nice newspaper, of going to see a cave of stalactites, which was discovered by a rabbit. It is in the suburbs of a town named Colle, in France, but only a step from the frontier. I was obliged to crawl over the ground for an hour, in order to see a few crystallisations more or less ridiculous, in the form of carrots or turnips, hanging from the roof.

I found here a complete desert; all the hotels are empty, not an Englishman in the street. It is just the time, however, to spend a few days here. The weather is superb, just warm enough to be comfortable in the shade, but the sun is no longer dangerous. In two months everything will be crowded, and there will be a north-

wind of the most disagreeable kind. Travellers are stupid sheep.

Did I tell you of the quail served with rice, which I ate at Milan? It was the most remarkable thing I discovered in that city, and is worth the journey. I return to this country with delight, after having visited so many others which are considered grander. The mountains of the Estérel impressed me as smaller than the Alps, but their outlines are as graceful as any that one can see. Enough said on the subject of my travels.

What are your intentions for this autumn? Do you intend to bury yourself in your Dauphiny mountains? Where you are concerned, one never knows what to expect. You look one way and row another. Good-bye. . . .

CLXXXIII

PARIS, *October 21, 1858.*

Here I am back in this city of Paris, where I am furious not to find you. It begins to be cold and dismal, and still no one has returned. I left Cannes in admirable weather, which became greyer and greyer with every step I took towards the North.

Pity me! While in Venice I bought a chan-

delier, which arrived yesterday broken in three places. The Jew who sold it to me promised to make good any damage, but what power have I to compel him to do so?

I have not yet become accustomed to sleeping in my own bed. I feel like a stranger here, and do not know what to do with my time. It would be altogether different if you were in Paris.

I bought in Cannes that strange animal, the *prigadiou,* whose portrait I have made for you. It is still alive, but I fear that you will find it no longer in this world. It lives on flies, and flies are beginning to be scarce. I have still a dozen which I am fattening. My friends think I am thinner. It seems to me that my health is a trifle better than before I went away. . . .

CLXXXIV

PARIS, *Sunday night, November 15, 1858.*

. . . I go to-morrow morning to Compiègne, until the 19th. Write to me until the 18th at the château. I am far from well, and the life I am to lead for the next week will not improve my health. Certain corridors must be crossed with neck and shoulders uncovered, which insure to those who frequent them a fine

cold. I can not say what will be the fate of those who have a cold already developed. Pardon this hideous hiatus.

This morning I met Sandeau, in the excited condition of a man who has just made his first appearance in knee-breeches. He put to me a hundred questions of such simplicity that I was alarmed for him. There will be also a number of great men from Outre-Manche, who will, doubtless, contribute much to the animation and hilarity of the occasion. Good-bye.

CLXXXV

Château de Compiègne,

Sunday, November 21, 1858.

Your letter drives me to despair. . . .

We are to remain at Compiègne one day longer. Instead of Thursday, we shall return Friday, on account of a comedy of Octave Feuillet, which is to be played Thursday night. I hope this will be the last delay. Besides, I am thoroughly ill. It is impossible to sleep in this place. One is either freezing or roasting, and this has given me an irritation of the chest, which is extremely painful. It is, however, impossible to fancy a host more amiable and a hostess more gracious.

Most of the invited guests left yesterday, and the rest of us make a select little party; that is to say, there are but thirty or forty to sit at table. We took a long walk in the woods, which recalled our rambles of former times. Were it not for the cold, the forest would be as beautiful as in the beginning of the autumn. The leaves still hang on the trees, but of the most lovely yellow and orange tints you can imagine. Deer crossed our path at every step.

To-day a fresh cargo of illustrious guests is to arrive. All the ministers, in the first place, then Russians and other foreigners. The heat in the salons will be intensified, of course. Good-bye.

When I think that I might have seen you in Paris to-day! I am tempted to run away and give them the slip. . . .

CLXXXVI

Château de Compiègne,

Wednesday, November 24, 1858.

Decidedly, the devil is taking a hand in affairs. I am to be here until the 2d or 3d of December. I feel like hanging myself when I see you in such a state of resignation. 'Tis a virtue which I do not possess, and I am in a rage. In spite of obstacles, I had made up my mind to

spend a few hours in Paris. Nothing is easier than not to appear at luncheon or a promenade. It is dinner which is the serious point, and when I spoke to the old courtiers of going to dine with Lady . . . in the city, they made such a face, that I saw it was not to be thought of.

Our life here is most trying on the nerves and brain. We leave rooms heated to forty degrees, to ride through the woods in an uncovered wagonette. It freezes here at seven degrees. We then return to dress, and find ourselves again in a tropical climate. I do not understand how the women can stand it. I neither sleep nor eat, and spend my nights thinking of Saint-Cloud or of Versailles. . . .

CLXXXVII

MARSEILLES, *December 29, 1858.*

I spent my last day in Paris with a crowd of people who did not leave me time to do up my packages and write to you. On my way to the station I left at your house your two volumes unwrapped, sufficient proof of my unusual haste. I hope your concierge will have confined himself to looking at the pictures, and that he delivered them to you promptly.

I was terribly cold on the journey. At

Dijon I met the snow, of which I saw the last only at Lyons. Here a slight mistral is blowing, but the sun shines gloriously. They write me from Cannes that the weather is magnificent, although cold for that climate—that is to say, a May temperature. I was shockingly ill in the train from Paris to Marseilles, and all night I thought I should suffocate. This morning I am greatly relieved. It is a pleasure to see the sun once more, and to feel its genuine warmth.

You have found nothing for me to give Sainte Eulalie, and I fancy that I may have forgotten to remind you of that important matter. No more handkerchiefs, no more boxes. I have been giving such things for twenty years. In an extreme case, I might return again to brooches; but if it were possible to select something newer, it would be desirable. I continue to rely on you to choose the books for the Misses Lagrénée. Think of all the responsibility you have taken on your shoulders! I have always found you worthy of my confidence. Your selection of books for young girls has always been exquisite.

When I pass through Marseilles again, I will attend to your commissions, if you have any, as to the purchase of cloaks or eastern stuffs. There is a Jew here, very dishonest, but with an excellent stock of goods, whom I honour with

my patronage. I have just seen a recent arrival from Cannes who tells me the roads are atrocious. I feel my flesh beginning to creep from to-night, and think of twenty-four hours, at least, on the road! If you go to Florence next year you must tell me in time. It is my dream to return there with you. I will be your guide in seeing the city.

Good-bye. Let me hear from you soon, and tell me what people are saying in Paris.

CLXXXVIII

CANNES, *January 7, 1859.*

I am settled here in some sort of fashion. The weather is cold but magnificent. From ten o'clock until four the sun is warm; but hardly has it touched the summit of the mountains of the Estérel, when there arises a keen wind from the Alps which cuts you in two. Nevertheless, I feel much better than when I was in Paris. I have had no paroxysms of pain, and the cough I brought away with me is entirely cured from being in the open air; only I eat nothing at all, and sleep but so-so.

On account of my nervous temperament, I became the other day terribly irritated and was obliged to dismiss my servant, to turn him out

on the spot. Persons of that class imagine themselves necessary to you and abuse your patience. I have found a fellow here to take care of my clothes, who is like a cat walking on ice with nut-shells on his feet. I should like to discover a treasure such as I have sometimes seen—some one who would understand my wishes without putting me to the necessity of speaking.

Englishmen are here in great numbers. I dined day before yesterday at Lord Brougham's, with I don't know how many misses, freshly arrived from Scotland, to whom the sight of the sun seemed to cause immense surprise. If I had the talent to describe costumes, I should amuse you with the description of theirs. You have never seen anything to equal them since the invention of crinoline.

I am reading the *Memoirs of Catherine II.* As a representation of manners and customs it is remarkable. This and the *Memoirs of the Margrave of Bayruth* give a singular idea of the people of the eighteenth century, and especially of the court-life of the period. When Catherine II married the grand duke, who became afterwards Peter III, she had a wealth of diamonds and beautiful brocade gowns, and yet her living apartment consisted of a single room, which served as a passageway to her women, who,

twenty-six in number, all slept in one room beside that of the queen. There is not a tradesman's wife to-day who does not live more comfortably than did empresses a hundred years ago.

The memoirs of Catherine stop, unfortunately, at the most interesting moment, before the death of Elisabeth. She says enough, however, to give the strongest reasons for believing that Paul I was the son of a Prince Soltykof. It is a singular thing that the manuscript in which all these choice incidents are related she dedicated to her son, this same Paul I.

I have learned that you executed conscientiously my commission for the purchase of books. I have even received Olga's acknowledgments. She seems enchanted with her portion. One book especially, something about *Gems of Poetry*(*?*), has produced a tremendous effect. I inclose her eulogies. I hope your fertile imagination will not rest with this success, and that it will find me something for my cousin, Sainte Eulalie.

Good-bye, dear friend. I should like to send you a little of my sunshine. Take care of yourself, and think of me. The *prigadiou* is remarkably well. After his fast of six weeks he has begun to eat again. He devoured three flies the day of his arrival in Cannes. At present, he has

become so fastidious that he will eat nothing but the heads. Good-bye again. . . .

CLXXXIX

CANNES, *January 22, 1859, at night.*

Marvellous moonlight, not a cloud, the sea as smooth as a mirror, and no breath of wind. From ten o'clock until five it was as warm as a June day. The longer I stay the more I am convinced that it is the light that does me good, more than the warmth and exercise. We had one rainy day, followed by one of gloom and threatening skies. I had horrible spasms of coughing, but as soon as the sun reappeared, Richard was himself again.

How are you, dear friend? Have the dinners of the *Kings* and of the *Carnival* fattened you much? As for me, I eat nothing at all. At the same time, a friend who came down from Paris expressly to see me considers my food excellent. We have nothing but some queer-looking fish, mutton, and woodcock. You may believe that Cannes is becoming too civilised, entirely too much so. They are now engaged in destroying one of my favourite walks, the rocks near Napoule, to build the railroad in that direction. When it is completed we can take ad-

vantage of it, as we did that of Bellevue; but Cannes will then become infested with the Marseillais, and all its picturesqueness will be lost.

Do you know a creature called the hermit-crab? It is a small lobster, the size of a locust, and has a tail without any scales. He finds a shell which fits his tail, crawls into it, and thus moves himself along the sea-shore. Yesterday I found one, and very carefully broke the shell without injuring the crab, which I then placed in a dish of sea-water. He made there the most piteous appearance. I then put an empty shell on the dish. The little creature approached it, moved around it, then raised one claw in the air, evidently to measure the height of the shell. After meditating a half minute, he thrust one of his claws into the shell to assure himself that it was really empty. Then, seizing it with his fore-claws, he took a somersault in such a way that his tail entered the shell. At once he began to walk about the dish, with the satisfied air of a man coming out of a furnishing shop with a new coat. I have seldom seen such evidences of reasoning in animals as this.

You will observe that I have given myself up entirely to the study of nature. Besides my researches on animals (I have also the story of a

goat to tell you), I have painted some landscapes, of which the last one is always more beautiful than the others. Unfortunately, a friend of mine here has filched my two best works. My friend, who is far more of an artist than I, is in a perpetual state of admiration of this country. We spend our days sketching, returning at night utterly exhausted, when I have no courage for writing. Nevertheless, I have written an article on the *Dictionary of Personal Property,* by Viollet-le-Duc, which I shall send with this letter. I should like you to read it. While it is short, it contains, I fancy, an idea or two.

Did I tell you that my friend Augier wishes to have a melodrama on *The False Demetrius,* and that I must work also on this? Finally, I have promised the *Revue des Deux Mondes* an article on Prescott's *Philip II.* Good-bye.

CXC

CANNES, *February 5, 1859.*

. . . For two days we have had bad weather, which has made me desperately ill. I have formed for my own case a medical theory which is as good as any other; it is, that sunlight is a necessity to me. When the sky is overcast, I suffer; when it rains, I am perfectly good-for-

nothing; when the sun reappears at last, I am on my feet again.

It was during the bad weather that the new imperial highness * crossed the sea. With us it (the sea) was devilish boisterous, and as wild as the ocean. I thought of the sufferings of that poor princess, married but the night before, her first experience on the sea, and with the expectation of an harangue by the mayor as soon as she should land. Do you not think it preferable in Paris to belong to the bourgeois? I should like to do so in Cannes.

My house is situated in front of the *Hôtel de la Poste.* My windows face the sea, and from my bed I can see the islands. It is a delicious view. I have about thirty sketches, more or less poor, but which I have enjoyed making. You shall have several, if you make a wise choice; if not, I shall select them for you. The almond-trees are in bloom in every direction, but the winter has been so severe and the summer so dry that the jessamines are almost entirely blighted. If you wish to have any acacias, you have but to mention it.

Yesterday I corrected the proofs of the article of which I spoke to you. As for *Demetrius,* I have abandoned all thought of it; and it needed

* The Princess Clotilde had just married Prince Napoleon.

your letter to remind me that I had ever thought of it.

A colleague is a useful person to have near one, in that he knows, in the first place, all the tricks of the trade, and, besides, that he can meet all the actors and other unsavory people whom my mightiness does not wish to see. I received a letter this morning from a M. Beyle, of Grasse, who is an admirer of mine, who is twenty-two years old, and who asks permission to read to me several works of his own composition. Can you comprehend such a sudden disaster, when one thinks himself safe from everything literary?

I have had another misfortune. My *prigadiou* died suddenly during the stormy weather. I am thinking of raising a monument to his memory on the rock where I found him. I continue my investigations of the habits of hermit-crabs. The study of instinct in dumb creatures is extremely interesting, I assure you. I have also a dog, who belongs ostensibly to my servant, but who has attached himself to me. He understands everything that is said to him, even in French, and since he has seen his master serving me he holds him in contempt.

I should be glad if you would read Caesar, by Ampère, which has just appeared. It is possible that I may be obliged to write a critique con-

cerning it, and since it is written in Alexandrine metre, the possibility terrifies me. I should like to take your opinion of it cut and dried, for I never could criticise verse.

I am beginning to count the days. The month will not come to an end, I hope, without seeing you. I suspect that in Paris you feel no longing for mountain air or legs of mutton. I myself am living in the open air. I sleep no better than ever, but I have good legs, and I can climb without losing my breath.

Good-bye. Write once more and tell me the news and the novelties of Paris. I am so rusty that I have taken to reading Mormon leaflets; to reach this point one must come to Cannes.

CXCI

PARIS, *March 24, 1859.*

Were you free to-day? To my distress, I supposed I was engaged for the whole day, which prevented me from writing and asking to see you. At the last moment I found myself perfectly free, with all the chagrin that you may imagine.

I am glad if my article on Prescott's work has pleased you. I am not too well satisfied with it myself, because I have not said half of what

I wished to say, in accordance with the aphorism of Philip II, that one should speak only well of the dead. The work is really mediocre, and not even interesting. It seems to me that if the author had been less of a Yankee he might have done something better. . . .

CXCII

PARIS, *April 23, 1859.*

The news has made me ill, although I was not at all surprised. Everything now is given over to chance. I suppose your brother is ready to be off. I wish him all the good luck possible. The war,* I fancy, will be violent enough at first, but it will not last long. The financial condition of every one concerned will not allow its continuance. While strolling yesterday in the woods, where there were multitudes of birds, it seemed extraordinary that in such weather as this people should be amusing themselves fighting.

I hope you find the *Memoirs of Catherine* entertaining. There is a flavour of local colour which I find delightful. What a ridiculous creature was a great lady of that period, and how clear as day does it appear from this story that

* The war in Italy.

nothing but strangling could have had any effect on a beast like Peter III!

Some one gave me to read a novel by Lady Georgina Fullerton, written in French, with a request that I should note the passages that are imperfect. There is nothing in the book but Béarnese peasants who eat bread and butter and poached eggs, and who sell peaches at thirty francs a basket. I might as well try to write a Chinese novel. You ought to take this book and correct it for me for the trouble I have taken to lend you so many books which you have never returned. I went to the Exposition yesterday, and it seemed to me shockingly commonplace. The tendency of art is to a low level which amounts to positive flatness.

CXCIII

PARIS, *Thursday, April 28, 1859.*

I received your letter last night. You will stop at . . ., I imagine. It would be folly on your part to attempt to go farther. I shall not repeat what you already know of the sympathy I feel for your anxieties. When one is the sister of a soldier, one must become accustomed to the sound of cannon. Since last night, moreover, the signs of peace are brighter than they were several

days ago. It appears, even, that there is a probability of the acceptance by Austria of the proffered arbitration by England, and also by France. Nevertheless, many troops are departing, and two regiments have already landed at Genoa, beneath a deluge of flowers. I believe there will be war, but it will not continue long, and I hope that after the first conflict all Europe will interpose between the belligerent parties.

Austria, moreover, for lack of means, would be unable to maintain a long struggle, and it is thought by many persons that the principal object of her rash act is to offer a pretext for pleading bankruptcy. It seems to me that the feeling here is better than it was. The people are bellicose and over-confident, the soldiers in high spirits and full of assurance. The Zouaves departed, after being away from their barracks and sleeping under the stars for a week, saying that in time of war there was no such thing as home comforts. On the day of their departure not a man was missing.

There is in our army a gaiety and ardour absolutely lacking among the Austrians. Although scarcely optimistic, I have firm confidence in our success. Our former reputation is so well and widely established, that those who fight against us do so with faint hearts. Do not

use your imagination in creating tragic possibilities; remember that very few bullets strike, and that the war in which we are to engage will prove tremendously interesting to your brother. Do not intimate to your sister-in-law that the fascinating Italian ladies will throw themselves at the heads of our soldiers. You may rest assured that they will be petted, and will be fed on *macaroni stupendi,* while the Austrian soldiers are likely to find verdigris sometimes in their soup. If I were your brother's age, a campaign in Italy would give me the agreeable opportunity of observing one of the most splendid spectacles, the awakening of an oppressed people.

Good-bye, dear friend. Let me hear from you promptly, and keep me informed of your plans.

CXCIV

PARIS, *May 7, 1859.*

I have not replied to your letter immediately, because I have been waiting to hear of your new address. I can not believe that you are still at . . .; yet I am in hopes that this letter will overtake you somewhere, even in Turin, if you decided to go so far. Now that war is declared, remember that all bullets do not hit their mark, and that there is a great deal of space above and

around a man. If you have read *Tristram Shandy,* you will have learned that every ball carries its message, most of which, luckily, are intended to fall on the ground.

Your brother will return with his epaulets, and will have taken part in the noblest campaign since the Revolution and General Bonaparte. I wish the latter could have been in the field in person; it would give us absolute certainty of success. In considering the pros and the cons, however, the appearances weigh rather in our favour. If, as I imagine, we are victorious in the beginning, after the custom of the *furia francese,* it is probable that strenuous efforts will be made by all the European powers to arrest hostilities. Austria, who is already at the limit of her resources and ready to declare bankruptcy, will not need much persuasion, and on our side also, there will probably be moderation. If the war is prolonged, it will become a war of revolution, which will circle the globe, but this seems much more improbable than the other supposition.

If you care to know the news, every one is surprised at the announcement of the names of the new ministers; one tries to discover some reason for them, but without success. The English are becoming tranquil; the Germans quite the contrary. I fear the former far more than the

latter. There is still talk of a Russian alliance, but I do not believe it will come to anything. The Russians have nothing to lose in the quarrel, and, no matter what the result, they will always contrive to work to their own advantage. Meanwhile they amuse themselves making Panslavic intrigues among the Austrian subjects, who regard the Emperor Alexander as their Pope.

General Klapka left Paris three weeks ago, to found a bank in Constantinople. Many other Hungarian officers have followed the same road, which seems to me a bad sign. A Hungarian revolution is not an impossibility, but it would, I think, do us more harm than good.

Nothing new from the seat of war. The Austrians appear to be somewhat shamefaced and bashful. It is expected that before the end of the month there will be an encounter. Our soldiers are in high spirits and splendidly enthusiastic. Here, the common people and small tradesmen are belligerent. The great mass of people take a keen interest in the crisis, and are praying for our success. The salons, particularly those of the Orleanists, are absolutely anti-French, and, moreover, stark-mad. They fancy that they will return on the tide, and that their burgraves will resume the thread of their dis-

courses, interrupted in 1848. Poor creatures! they do not realise that following this, there is nothing but the Republic, anarchy, and division of property.

I should like to know your plans. It seems to me that in Paris you would be at the centre of news, and in a time like this that is essential. For this reason I think I shall not go to Spain; I shall bite my nails to the quick, probably, waiting for despatches.

If you went as far as . . ., which I think scarcely probable, I do not doubt that you will soon return. In the midst of all your tribulations, are you thinking of a retreat for several days in some oasis?

You and I, it seems to me, need very much to rest peacefully for a few days, as a preparation for the warlike emotions which we shall be obliged to suffer. Nothing at this time would be easier for you, if you wished to do a kind act. If you will warn me a little in advance, I shall be ready to bring you here, or somewhere else, wherever you will; I can easily manage to get away for a week. Be good enough to give the matter your careful consideration, and let me know your decision; I shall await it with the utmost impatience.

Good-bye, dear friend. Be of good courage.

Do not create spectres, and have faith. I kiss you tenderly, as I love you.

CXCV

PARIS, *May 19, 1859.*

It seems to me that in your place I should be in Paris, for it is here that all the news comes first. I run after it all day long. The loan has been negotiated, not for 500,000,000, but for 2,000,000,000 francs, besides several cities whose value I do not know. During the last three weeks, 54,000 volunteers have been enrolled. These figures are authentic. The Austrians are retiring, and the stakes are open on the question of whether they will give battle before abandoning Milan, or whether they will proceed at once to form an unbroken triangle bounded by Mantua, Verona, and Peschiera. Our officers speak in the highest praise of the reception accorded them. The Germans are howling at us, just as they did in 1813. Some think it is due to their inveterate hatred of us; others, that beneath it all is a definite amount of red-hot liberalism, which to-day takes the Teutonic form.

The Russians are arming vigorously, which causes general food for thought. A certain grand duchess Catherine has just made a visit

to the Empress; the significance of this is either auspicious or otherwise. Russia is a powerful ally, who could swallow Germany alive, but who would also procure for us the enmity, and, perhaps, the hostility of England. We have lived for so long a life of sybaritism that we have forgotten the sentiments of our fathers. We must return to their philosophy of life. We danced in Paris while we fought in Germany, and this continued for more than twenty years! In the present age wars can not drag on so long, because revolutions interfere, and because they are too costly. This is why, if I were young, I should be a soldier.

But let us have done with this hideous subject. The misfortune which is to come can not be avoided and the wisest plan is to think of it as little as possible; and it is for this reason that I wish so ardently to take a walk with you, far, far from the scene of war, where we shall think only of the leaves and the blooming flowers, and of other things no less agreeable. Whatever may happen, is not this course the most sensible? If you have read Boccaccio, you will have learned that after all crushing misfortunes one comes to that point. Is it not wiser to begin thus? Great truths and reasonable facts do not find ready access to your brain. I shall never forget your

astonishment when I told you there were woods in the suburbs of Paris.

I took dinner at the home of a Chinese, who offered me an opium pipe. I was suffering from suffocation; at the third puff I was cured. A Russian who tried the pipe after me was completely transformed in less than ten minutes; from a very homely man, he became a truly handsome one. This continued fully a quarter of an hour. Is it not singular, the effect produced by a few drops of poppy juice?

Good-bye. Answer me quickly.

CXCVI

PARIS, *May 28, 1859.*

You have a way of announcing bad news that is maddening to me. You take a great deal of pains in order, perhaps, to smooth them over; better to tell me all that you would have done, *if* . . . It is like Roland's horse, who had every good quality, but who was dead. If he had not been dead, he would have run faster than the wind. I do not care at all for that kind of pleasantry, because, in the first place, you are suspicious of me; and, again, because it is exasperating enough to have you so far away, without being obliged to regret the hours I might have

spent with you. The time of your return, probably, is not far distant. Meanwhile, keep me informed of your actions and your projects, for I can not imagine that you will not be up to all sorts of mad tricks.

Not a word of news. We are told not to expect any before twelve days or thereabouts. Germany is still in a tremendous state of fermentation, but the indications tend to show that there will be more beer drunk than blood shed. Prussia will resist to the utmost the pressure of the *Franzosen-fresser*. They say now that they must recover not only Alsace, but also the German provinces of Russia. This last bit of facetiousness seems to indicate that the Teutonic sentiment of enthusiasm is both inconsiderate and wanting in seriousness.

M. Ivan Tourguenieff, who has just arrived in Paris, direct from Moscow, says that we have the sympathy of all Russia, and that the army would be charmed to settle with Austria. The popes are preaching that God intends to punish them for the persecutions which they inflict on the Orthodox Greeks of Slavic race, and a subscription has been opened to send tracts and Slavonic Bibles to the Croatians, to save them from papist heresy. All this is somewhat like a political propaganda of Panslavism.

At this moment a serious attack against the Derby ministry is being organised. Lord Palmerston and Lord John would become reconciled (a condition most improbable), or, what would seem even more so, would agree on the resignation of the present cabinet. The Radicals promise to lend their support to the movement. The Whigs claim to have 350 votes against 280. Whatever be the outcome of the affair, I think we have very little to gain by a change. Lord Palmerston, although the original promoter of the Italian agitation, will not support it any more than Lord Derby. At the same time, he will be scarcely likely to temporise with Austria, and he will not seek an opportunity to create embarrassing situations for us.

I have received a letter from Leghorn. We made our entry there beneath a flood of flowers and *gold powder,* which the ladies threw from the windows.

Good-bye. Write to me soon, sensibly, without any diplomacy. I am particularly anxious to know what you intend to do, for this will influence my own plans.

CXCVII

PARIS, *June 11, 1859.*

I do not expect to stir from the city. If your brother is still at the head of a besieging battery, I fancy he will not leave Grenoble until the Austrians are driven back into their famous triangle or rectangle, whichever it is. According to the opinion of the soldiers, this will not occur until after another battle near Lodi, for it appears that there are certain places which have the privilege of attracting the armies. But no one seems yet to understand the meaning of war with the aid of railroads, telegraph lines, and rifled guns. I have lost faith in everything and am consumed with anxiety.

The great politicians, burgraves, and others, people as imbecile as the old military men, announce that all Europe is preparing to interfere, with entreaties and threats, between the *Adda* and the *Mincio*. This, indeed, is highly probable; yet I do not see very well how it is going to mend matters. After the famous phrase, *Sin all' Adriatico,* how is it possible to abandon Italy half delivered? How can one expect that an emperor of twenty-four, obstinate and under Jesuit influence, beaten, moreover, will confess

that he has acted like a fool, and plead for forgiveness? Is it not to be expected that the Italians also, who up to the present have acted with discretion, pending the negotiations, will commit every folly imaginable?

If we have all Europe at our heels, how shall we get out of it without having recourse to our last trump, which is a general revolution, supposing even that such a proposition would meet with approval? It appears that Austria intends to send her last soldier to Italy. Everything looks very gloomy, with little to reassure us, but it is one reason more why we should gather strength and courage for the misfortunes which may befall us. . . .

I am thinking of this warm weather and of the green leaves. This time last year I was in Switzerland, far from imagining all that has happened and all that is still to happen.

Good-bye. You know that I am waiting impatiently for your letters. Do not fail to be precise and clear in explaining your intentions.

CXCVIII

PARIS, *July 3, 1859.*

Why are you such an age sending me any news of yourself? Since it appears evident that

you have no intention of leaving . . . ., I am extremely anxious to go there to see you. We might arrange with Lady . . . . for an excursion into the mountains of Dauphiny. Think over this proposition. You can not conceive of all the visions I have seen since the return of warm weather—visions sometimes of Abbeville, sometimes of Versailles. . . .

I am considered a prophet here, for having announced three days ago that peace would be made between the two emperors only at the expense of the neutrals. I confess that the last part of the prophecy seems to me somewhat difficult to realise. It is not, however, impossible, and it would be entirely reasonable for Solon said that the man who does not take part in civil war should be declared a public enemy.

My poor devil of a servant was shot in the leg and received a fracture, at the battle of Solferino. As he wrote me nine days after the battle, and the leg had not been amputated, I hope he will come out of it safely. Everybody at my house is in tears, and I do not know how I am to get anything to eat. I am, besides, far from well. I can not sleep, and have frequent spasms of choking. I am longing for you, to take care of me in your own way. Good-bye.

CXCIX

PARIS, *Tuesday night, July 20, 1859.*

You alone give me resignation to accept peace. It may have been necessary; but we ought not to have commenced so bravely, only to end by getting things into a worse muddle than they were in the beginning. After all, why should we concern ourselves in the liberty of a pack of bricklayers and musicians?

To-night we listened to that which you will read in the *Moniteur.** It was finely delivered, and its tenor was one of nobility, frankness, and sincerity. The address was full of good sense and truth. The returning officers say that the Italians are a set of brawlers and cowards, and that the Piedmontese alone can fight, but pretend that we interfere with them and that without us they would have been more successful.

The empress asked me, in Spanish, how I liked the address; from which I infer that she did not like it. I replied, in order to reconcile court-flattery and truth, "*Muy necessario.*" To tell the truth, it pleased me, for it takes a brave man to say, "Do you believe that it has not cost me?" etc.

*The address of the emperor, on his return from Italy.

When I make you a proposition I am always perfectly serious about it. All depends on you. I am invited to visit in Scotland and England. If you return to Paris, I shall not budge a step. I shall be under an extraordinary obligation to you, and if you had any idea of the pleasure you would give me, I can not believe that you would hesitate. I shall await your decision.

I had a horrible fright this morning. There came to see me a man, dressed in black, with an abundance of white linen and an attractive manner. He had an unusually handsome and noble face. He said he was a lawyer. After taking a seat, he told me that he was inspired by God, whose unworthy instrument he was, and whom he obeyed in all things. He had been accused of attempting to kill his porter with a dagger, but he had only shown him a crucifix. This devil of a man rolled his eyes in the most terrible way, and held me truly spellbound. While speaking, he kept his hand constantly in the pocket of his coat, and I expected to see him draw out a dagger. Unluckily, he had only to select one on my table. I had no weapon but a Turkish pipe, and I was calculating the moment when prudence would indicate that I should break it over his head. At last he drew from his terrible pocket a rosary, and fell at my knees. I preserved a

glacial composure, but I was afraid, for how can one protect himself against a madman?

He then left, making many apologies, and thanking me for the interest I had manifested in him. Notwithstanding my terror, inspired by the sight of the animal's brilliant eyes—frightful, I assure you, and penetrating—I made a curious observation. I asked him if he was quite certain that he was inspired, and if he had made any experiments which would give him assurance on this point. I reminded him that Gideon, when called of God, had taken the precaution to require a few trifling miracles as a test.

"Do you understand Russian?" I asked him.

"No."

"Very well. I am going to write two Russian sentences on these slips of paper. One of these sentences contains an impious thought. From what you have told me, one of these papers will horrify you. Will you make the test?"

He accepted. I wrote the sentences. He kneeled down and prayed; then suddenly he exclaimed:

"My God is unwilling to accept a frivolous experiment. It would have to be something of serious importance."

Do you not admire the prudence of this poor

lunatic, who feared that, unknowingly, the experiment would not turn out favourably?

Good-bye. I await a prompt reply.

CC

PARIS, *July 21, 1859.*

My letter of yesterday crossed with yours. That is to say, it was no letter that you sent me, but a most exasperating curl-paper. I can readily fancy the frivolous life you are leading, now that you are reassured as to your brother's safety.

I am really ill, from the effects of the intense heat, and from the absolute lack of sleep and appetite. I doubt not that in both respects you have nothing of which to complain. It seems to me at times that I am making rapid strides towards the tomb. This thought is sometimes most persistent, and I should like to be diverted from it. This is one reason why I wish so eagerly to see you. You will receive both of my letters at the same time. I hope you will answer explicitly and literally.

I am reading the *Letters of Madame du Deffand,* which will amuse you tremendously. It gives a picture of a society which is agree-

able, and not altogether frivolous, much less so, indeed, than is generally supposed. That which impresses me as entirely unlike the present time, is, in the first place, the universal desire to be agreeable, and the trouble that each one thinks himself obliged to take; in the second place, it is the sincerity and fidelity of the affections. These people were much kinder than me, and than you, whom I love no longer.

Good-bye. I am in too bad a humour to write more. For several days I have been again troubled by palpitation, and I am horribly weak and nervous.

CCI

PARIS, *Saturday, July 30, 1859.*

I shall remain in Paris until the 15th of August, after which I shall go, probably, to the Highlands for a few days. But it must be understood, of course, that you shall have the preference over everything else, and any day that you indicate you may expect me without fail. You will notice that I am definite; see if, in your letters, you can not be a little so yourself. It seems that you can no longer exist away from mountains and venerable forests. I imagine that you are browned by the sun and have

gained in flesh. No matter how you look, I shall certainly be charmed to see you, and you may be sure of being treated with the most tender affection.

I see from your letters that you are spending your time merrily in promenades and amusements of all kinds. I try to imagine what may be the relative merit of an inhabitant of Pas-de-Calais compared to one from Grenoble. Everything considered, I have leanings toward the former, for the reasons that he is less noisy, and has never had any parliament to persuade him that he has a mind, and that he has a political importance. I knew, however, two intelligent men from Grenoble, but they had spent their life in Paris. I can not conceive of what the women can be like. It is not very long since I abandoned imaginary pictures of the human heart, so that I might cease to interest myself in the mental status of the present age. . . .

I am still ill, and suspect sometimes that I am travelling on the grand railway which leads beyond the tomb. At times the idea is painful to me, at others I find in it the consolation which one feels in a railway train: the absence of responsibility before a superior and irresistible power. . . .

CCII

PARIS, *August 12, 1859.*

I shall visit you before the end of the month. It is very probable that before going to Spain I shall make a short journey to Germany. I am not even sure that I shall go to Spain at all, for I hear the cholera has broken out there, and that will drive away the friends whom I wish to see. Tell me, therefore, when I may go to see you. When you wish to delay negotiations you are more clever than the Austrian diplomats in finding dilatory excuses. Send me a prompt answer. It is understood, of course, that I shall always accept good reasons, sensible objections, but they must be explained definitely and frankly. You are well aware that whenever it is a question of deciding between the greatest happiness for me and the least inconvenience for you, I shall never hesitate.

I told you—did I not?—that I was reading the *Letters of Madame du Deffand,** that is, the last ones. They are most interesting, and give one a good idea of the social life of that period. There is, however, a great deal of tiresome repetition. You shall read them, if you wish.

* The last *Letters of Madame du Deffand,* which had just been published.

CCIII

PARIS, *Saturday, September 3, 1859.*

I fear very much that we shall meet no more this year on this side of the Acheron, and I am unwilling to leave without bidding you farewell, and telling you something of my peregrinations. I shall start Monday—that is, day after to-morrow—for Tarbes, where I shall remain, probably, until the 12th, when I shall return to Paris for several days, and leave again soon afterwards for Spain. If I believed in presentiments, I should not cross the Pyrenees; but it is too late to change my mind, and I must make my visit, which will probably be the last, to Madrid. I am too old and too ill to undertake another such journey. If I did not feel in duty bound to go bidding good-bye to some of my best friends, I should not budge from my hole.

While I am not ill, I am so nervous that it is worse than illness. I neither eat nor sleep, and have, besides, the blue devils. My only consolation is the knowledge that you are enjoying yourself, and are rapidly gaining in flesh among your mountains and country-folk.

I have just received from London the *Memoirs of the Princess Doschkoff*, and am not yet entirely reconciled to the thirty francs which

it cost me. I am promised on my return from Tarbes a novel written in Little-Russian dialect, and translated into Russian by M. Tourguenieff. It is said to be a masterpiece, superior to *Uncle Tom.* There are, besides, the *Letters of the Princess of Ursins,* which are highly spoken of; but I have a horror of that woman, and do not care for the book. As for interesting books, I know of nothing new; I have dipped into several, in order to beguile the lonely evenings, and I have found none worth the trouble of cutting the leaves.

I met M. About the other day. He is always delightful. He has promised me something. He lives in Saverne, and spends his time in the woods. A month ago he came across an extraordinary-looking animal walking on all-fours. He wore a black coat and patent leathers, but was minus socks. It was the professor of rhetoric at Angoulême, who, having had conjugal differences, went to Baden, where he promptly lost all he had, and returning to France through the woods, had got lost, and for a week had had nothing to eat. About carried, or rather dragged, him to a village, where he was provided with clothing and food, but he died, nevertheless, at the end of a week. It appears that after the animal-man has lived for a certain time in

complete solitude, and has reached a certain condition of physical wretchedness, it seems, I repeat, that this noble creature walks on all-fours. About assures me that he makes a hideous-looking animal.

Write to me in care of the Minister of State at Tarbes.

Good-bye. I hope the autumn opens more benignly for you than it has for me. It is cold and rainy, with much electricity in the air. Take care of yourself, eat and sleep, since you are able to do it.

CCIV

PARIS, *September 15, 1859.*

I should have written to you from Tarbes immediately after receiving your letter, but I was out all the time and in a constant state of excitement. First came a letter from Saint Sauveur, where I was obliged to go to spend a day; and the following day my visit was returned at the home of M. Fould.* Consequently, there was a tremendous commotion, and Madame Fould had to contrive a dinner and breakfast, which, in a town like that I have just left, is no small undertaking. Besides, as lodgings had to be pro-

* The visit of the emperor and empress.

vided for eight persons, I, as well as M. Fould's son, was obliged to give up my room and go to the inn. In the midst of all this august upheaval, it would have been impossible to find paper and pens in the house.

I left the 13th, to spend the night at Bordeaux, and arrived here last night, without any other mishap than losing my keys, and among minor misfortunes this is one of the most serious. I am still hoping to come across them again, or else I must call in the locksmith. As for my visit to Spain, I am depending on a friend who is to go with me. He is a member of the Cortes, and his establishment is to open October 1st. We shall go, probably, the 25th; I do not know his final decision. We shall take the Marseilles route, in order to go by sea to Alicante. . . .

This short trip to the Pyrenees has done me good. At Bagnères I took a bath, which had a wonderfully soothing effect on my nerves, quieting them for two days as I have not known for twenty years. The doctor there is an old friend of mine, who urged me strongly to spend a season at the baths next year. He guarantees that I shall come away a perfectly well man. I am somewhat sceptical, but it is worth trying.

Their majesties were in good health and excellent spirits at Saint Sauveur. I admired the

behaviour of the natives, who had the good taste not to follow them about, and wherever they went to leave them the most complete liberty. While there the emperor bought a dog of the ancient Pyrenean race. It is a little larger than a donkey, and is a beautiful animal, which climbs over the rocks like a chamois.

It had been a long time since I had associated with the provincials. At Tarbes they are an endurable class, and are exceedingly obliging. Nevertheless, it passes comprehension how any one can remain with them for a month. I had plenty of ortolans and quail *pâtés* to eat, which is, perhaps, a matter of more importance. You never mention your health. I suppose it is excellent.

Good-bye.

. . . I shall write again before leaving.

CCV

PARIS, *September 20, 1859.*

There is certainly an evil genius who interferes in our affairs. I fear that I shall have to go without seeing you. I had planned to leave Paris the 30th, in order to be in Bayonne the 1st. It turns out that in the Madrid diligences and

mail-coaches, every place is engaged until October 16th. There is nothing to do, therefore, but to go by sea—that is, to go by steam-boat from Marseilles to Alicante. If some new difficulty does not arise, I shall reach Marseilles the evening of the 28th (my birthday, parenthetically), and the 29th I shall be on the way.

Although you have kept me in a shocking rage this summer with your *ifs* and your *noes,* it makes me very miserable, I assure you, to go without bidding you good-bye. After living such an age without seeing you, to enter again on another term of absence almost as long! Who knows if you will be in Paris when I return? I am starting with all sorts of dismal thoughts; I hope yours are more rose-coloured.

My little visit to Tarbes did me good, and I imagine the air of the suburbs of Madrid will complete my cure. As always happens when I am about to go on a journey, I have an inclination for work, which I should never feel, doubtless, if I had remained at home. I am taking paper with me in order to write in Madrid. Think of me the 29th of this month. I shall in all probability be ill, while you will be in consultation with your dressmaker on the subject of your fall gowns. The Gulf of Lyons is always abominable, and it will probably be worse than

ever at this equinoctial season, which was created for my express annoyance.

To turn to the bright side of the prospect, I shall find, on my arrival in Alicante, a railroad which will take me to Madrid in one day, instead of being obliged to spend three days being jolted in the worst of coaches, over the roughest ruts that one can imagine. During my absence I shall probably have some commissions to give you. However, we have plenty of time to speak of them, for I do not like to form plans long in advance, especially with you, who, as you know, sometimes forget them.

You will find Paris entirely empty. I know of a good many persons who are leaving, but, except yourself, I know of none who are returning. The trees are parched, the peaches are all gone, and the grapes are good for nothing. If you have been eating ortolans in Dauphiny, you will not think much of the game which you will find in Paris. I am not guilty of the sin of gluttony and am never hungry any more, and pay no attention to what I have to eat.

I regret Paris; I should have seen you there. That is its only attraction for me. Good-bye. You might write me once more here, until the 27th. I fancy—think of the absurdity of it!—that you may surprise me by arriving the 26th.

CCVI

MADRID, *October 21, 1859.*

I received with great pleasure your little letter, and especially your amiable souvenir. I reached here exceedingly weary, not from the sea, which was perfectly calm, but on account of the multitude of small worries and annoyances which pile upon one just about to start on a journey. Through an excess of zeal on the part of my friends, your letter preceded me to Madrid. It was lost for several days, and it was only with difficulty that it was at last recovered, safe and sound.

I find all here greatly changed. The ladies, whom I left slender as spindles, have become elephantine, for the climate of Madrid is uncommonly fattening. You may expect to see me expanded by a third. Meanwhile, I eat hardly anything, and do not feel at all well. It is very cold, raining intermittently, and the sun seldom appears. I spend nearly every day at Carabanchel. At night we go to the Opera, which is all that is deplorable.

I came this morning to Madrid to attend an academic meeting, and return to-morrow to the country. Customs seem to have changed notably;

and politics and parliamentary procedure are singularly lacking in their former picturesqueness. At this moment there is talk of nothing but war. It is a question of avenging the national honour, and there is a general atmosphere of enthusiasm that reminds one of the crusades. It is thought that England regards the African expedition with disapproval, even that she wishes to prevent it. This but adds fuel to their warlike ardour. The army wishes to lay siege to Gibraltar, after having first taken Tangiers. This state of affairs is no impediment to the speculation carried on on the Bourse. The mania for gain has made immense strides since my last visit—another French importation most disastrous for this country.

I went to a bull-fight Monday, and was not at all interested. I had the misfortune to learn too early the perfect type of beauty, and now, having seen Montès, I can no longer endure his degenerate successors. Beasts, as well as men, have degenerated. The bulls have become oxen, and the spectacle is a little too suggestive of the slaughter-house. I took my servant along. He has suffered all the emotions of a novice, and for two days has been unable to eat meat.

What I have seen again with all the pleasure of former years is the Museum. As I looked

at each familiar picture, it seemed to me that I was meeting an old friend! These, at least, do not change. Next week I expect to go to La Manche, to visit a venerable château belonging to the empress. From there I shall go to Toledo, in search of some old book advertised in a sale to be held there, and I shall then return to Madrid for the end of the month. I am trying to arrange my plans so that I may be in Paris about the 15th of November.

Good-bye.

CCVII

CANNES, *January 3, 1860.*

I wish you a prosperous and happy New Year. I should be glad if you had the weather that I am enjoying. As I write, all my windows are open, and yet a north wind is blowing, strong enough to make funny little waves on the sea. I thank you for getting the books. Evidently they gave satisfaction, for I received a complimentary letter from Olga. I suppose, in accordance with my wishes, you took special pains in your selection for her. The choice for next year will certainly be embarrassing, for you must have exhausted the catalogue of moral literature.

I am writing to you in a most inconvenient position. Three days ago, while sketching on

the sea-shore, I was attacked by lumbago, which came on me like a flash, without so much as saying " By your leave." Since that moment I have been all askew, although I rub with every sort of herb known to Saint John. The sun proving my best remedy, I roast myself in it all day.

We have stopping here baron Bunsen and his two daughters, both tired of waiting for some one to come along, and with shanks resembling Hercules' club, but one of whom sings very well. The baron is an intelligent man, and knows all that is going on, of which you keep me slightly informed. He told me of the discomfiture of the congress, which scarcely astonishes me.

I have read the brochure of the abbé. It impresses me as more unskilful than violent. He shows his hand so plainly, that he must certainly be considered an awful plague in Rome, where common-sense and shrewdness are not disregarded. The priests there are clever intriguers. Ours have the blustering instincts of the nation, and do all sorts of irrevelant things. The way he shelters himself behind his catacombs made me laugh, and also the martyr airs he assumes concerning the money which was offered him. You will see that he will ask for it in the end.

Here is a pretty story of this country. A farmer in the suburbs of Grasse was found dead

in a ravine into which he had fallen, or had been thrown, in the night. Another farmer went to see one of his friends, and accused him of killing the man.

"How and why did you do it?"

"Because he cast a spell over my sheep. When he did this I went to my shepherd, and he gave me three needles, which I put to boil in a little pot, and repeated over the pot some words he taught me. The same night that I put the pot on the fire, the man died."

Do not be astonished that my books were burned at Grasse, on the square in front of the church.

I am going next Tuesday to this place for several days, in spite of its manners. I am promised monuments of all sorts, and some beautiful mountains. I shall bring you some acacia flowers, since you always enjoy their perfume.

Good-bye, dear friend. I am tired to death from having written you three pages, for I can lean on but one elbow, and my back suffers with every movement of the body. Good-bye again. I thank you once more for the books. . . .

CCVIII

CANNES, *January 22, 1860.*

I found your letter awaiting me on my return from the country, or rather, the village, where I have spent a week almost under the eternal snows. Although situated on an elevated plateau, I did not suffer from the cold. I have seen rocks, cascades, and precipices of wonderful beauty; a great cavern containing a subterranean lake, the extent of which is not known, and which one may easily suppose to be the dwelling-place of all the gnomes and imps of the Alps; another huge cavern, three kilometres in length, from the interior of which there was a display of fireworks for my benefit. In fine, I have spent my week in admiration of pure nature.

I returned from my trip with horrible pains, and for two days I have been laid up, without being able to eat or sleep. I see decidedly that the machine is out of order, and is no longer worth anything at all. I hope it is quite otherwise with you, and that you have suffered no return of the fever. As you did not mention it, I fancy you are entirely cured of this distress. I am trying

to be patient under my sufferings, and succeed well enough during the day; but at night my patience deserts me, and I rage.

You have not told me what you paid for those moral books you bought for the Demoiselles de Lagrénée. It pleases me to believe that you remained within the limit of prudence which you observe in all your transactions. I shall have probably another debt to contract with you soon.

Some one lent me a pamphlet written by my confrère Villemain, which seems to be extraordinarily full of platitudes. When one has undertaken to write a book against the Jesuits, and has boasted of being the champion of liberty of the conscience against the omnipotence of the Church, it is amusing to see how he recants, and what poor arguments he employs. I believe everybody, except the emperor, has gone mad. He resembles the shepherds of the middle ages, who, by the power of their magic flute, compelled the wolves to dance. I have received a letter from Paris, with the news that the *Academy Française*, which, a few years ago, was Voltairian, wishes to elect the abbé Lacordaire, as a protest against the indignities to which the Pope is subjected. However, 'tis all the same to me. So long as I am not compelled to listen to their ser-

mons, they may elect every member of the Sacred College to the Academy.

Good-bye.

CCIX

CANNES, *February 4, 1860.*

You cause me great perplexity of mind concerning Sainte Eulalie, whom I had forgotten entirely. I am sure it is either the 11th or 12th. I accept with much gratitude your kind offer, but I know very little about those Byzantine affairs, and fear that what you suggest is far too modern a trinket for my cousin. We must remember that she seldom goes anywhere, and dresses in harmony with her age and in an eminently respectable fashion. Perhaps you are thinking of some buckles, or oxidized silver clasps, such as come from the Caucasus and elsewhere.

Anyway, you have full liberty, bearing in mind the following instructions: 1st, That your selection must not be too conspicuous, too modern, or too frivolous; 2d, that it does not cost much more than a hundred francs, and that it has the appearance of being worth much more; 3d, and, finally, that it does not give too much trouble. I am sure you will attend to this commis-

sion with your usual promptness and good judgment, and I thank you most heartily in advance.

This reminds me of something else, and that is, that I have never sent you my good wishes on your fête-day. When does it come? and, in the first place, what sort of a name have you? It seems to me it is a Lutheran or an heretical name. Is your patron saint the Evangelist, or the Baptist? And when is his fête-day? You may imagine that I wish to give you a surprise—a difficult thing to do.

I am at this moment lying on my couch in great distress. When I sit up it seems as if my chest were being scorched with hot iron. Doctor Maure advises me to apply some soothing lotion; but it does not in the least ease the pain.

I am expecting two of my friends who are coming to spend a week with me, and I am anxious lest the weather should be bad. Just now the sun shines magnificently, but this is an exceptional year, and one can not count on anything. The wind yesterday blew with such an icy blast that it seemed to come from Siberia.

Like you, I find politics very entertaining. To see certain people rage makes my heart rejoice. Good-bye. Next month I shall see you again. Meanwhile, I am ill, melancholy, and bored. My eyesight is failing, and I could no

longer sketch, even if my health would permit it. How sad it is to grow old! Good-bye.

CCX

CANNES, *February 21, 1860.*

Two of my friends have been visiting me, and my duties of guide, which have dragged me into several long excursions, have left me no leisure to reply to you promptly. Besides, it was only day before yesterday that I heard from my cousin about the Byzantine clasps. I send you her literal opinion. She thinks they are charming, too charming for her, and much too young. Nevertheless, for fear that her criticism has been too severe, she adds that she has just ordered a new gown expressly to wear with the clasps. If you are not satisfied with your success, you are difficult to please.

I am still about the same—that is, very far from well. On the one hand, a cold; on the other, a pain in the heart, of rheumatic variety, which is extremely uncomfortable and strange, for it does not prevent me from walking, and causes me suffering only when I sit down. This is what I endure when I draw after sunset on the seashore.

The weather just now is not fine. The sun

shines, but the air is chilly, and the mornings and evenings are sometimes most unpleasant, on account of the wind blowing from the Alps. Never before have I seen them so covered with snow, from base to summit. Snow fell this morning on the Estérel mountain, and a few flakes even on the square in front of my windows. This is something unheard of in Cannes, which even the oldest inhabitants can not remember having seen before. My only consolation is the thought that you in the north are much worse off. The newspapers make my teeth chatter with their accounts of ten degrees below zero, three feet of snow in Lyons, in Valence, and so forth. Nevertheless, I must leave my oasis and go to shiver in Paris.

I am thinking of starting next week, and as I am obliged to stop on the way to examine some monuments, I shall not reach Paris in time for the Imperial Assembly, which no doubt will lose much of its interest on account of my absence. So far as I can now tell, I shall arrive the 3d or 4th of March, and shall hope to find you in good health. I shall welcome you once more with great joy, so you may expect it.

Write to me at Marseilles, to be called for. It is probable that I shall go to Nice for a day or two, to form an opinion of an annexation, and then return to pack my trunks. You have not

sent me your account, which I fear is a formidable one. Whatever the material of the clasps, apparently they are not cheap. I hope, however, to bring back money enough to pay the bill without the necessity of selling my books.

By the way, have you not my copy of the *Voyage en Asie,* by M. de Gobineau? I looked for it here in vain the other day. If you have it, keep it for me.

I took my friends, day before yesterday, to the *pont de Gardonne.* It is a natural bridge uniting some of the rocks on a point of the Estérel. Through a small doorway you enter a grotto, from which you emerge by another door which opens directly on the sea. On this day the sea was wild and angry, and the grotto seemed to be a boiling caldron. The sailors had not dared to venture within, and we had to content ourselves with going around the abyss. It was wonderfully beautiful with its color and movement.

Good-bye. Keep well, and do not go out too much at night.

CCXI

Paris, *Sunday night, March 12, 1860.*

. . . I find your Paris atmosphere extremely heavy, and I have a continual headache.

I have as yet seen no one, and dare not go out at night. It seems to me extraordinary to make calls at ten o'clock at night.

No word about the book of my friend, M. de Gobineau; certainly it must hang heavy on your conscience. Suggest a novel for me to read; I am in deep need of one. While in Cannes I read a novel by Bulwer, *What will He do with It?* which seemed to me senile to the last degree. At the same time, it contains several pretty situations and an excellent sermon. As for the hero and heroine, they surpass in silliness all that is permissible by custom.

A book which has amused me uncommonly is the work of M. de Bunsen on the origin of Christianity, and about everything else in the universe, to speak more exactly. It is called, however, *Christianity and Mankind,* and is only seven volumes of from seven to eight hundred pages each. M. de Bunsen calls himself an orthodox Christian; but at the same time he treats the Old and New Testaments with contempt. . . .

I learned yesterday, that at one of the most recent masked balls a woman had the courage to appear in a costume of 1806 without any crinoline, and produced a tremendous sensation.

CCXII

PARIS, *March 4, 1860.*

We had yesterday the first suggestion of the return of spring. It did me a great deal of good, and I felt entirely made over. It seemed as if I were breathing the air of Cannes. To-day it is gray and gloomy. I need you very much, to take life patiently. Day by day it becomes more burdensome. People are so terribly stupid. The most inexplicable thing is the general ignorance one finds in this century of enlightenment, as it calls itself modestly. No one any longer knows a word of history.

You will have read Dupin's address, which amused me hugely. . . .

I have never succeeded in finding Gobineau, and I know very well why; you also. I made myself a few presents two days ago, at Poitiers'. I bought several beautiful old books, and some others, modern ones, in excellent bindings. Have you read the *Memoirs of Holland,* attributed to Madame de la Fayette? They were very entertaining. I will lend them to you, on good security, when you return. The binding is done by Bauzonnet.

I have had made a black Venetian domino,

with a lace biretta, or something of the kind, after the sketch I had drawn in Venice, and which I showed you. Since my return, in this untoward season, I am taking an unusual interest in the weather. . . .

CCXIII

Saturday, April 14, 1860.

. . . Since Easter I have been leading a very dissipated life. I have been to two balls, and have dined out every night. The ball where I was to appear for the first time in my domino with a Venetian biretta is postponed until the 24th, because the accomplices of Ortega, among whom are two relatives of the empress, are now on trial in Spain. If they are shot, which is quite in accord with the custom of the country, I believe the ball will be entirely abandoned, and I shall be out for my domino. I have met Ortega frequently, and he is, by the way, a charming fellow, and the darling of the fine ladies of Madrid. I have grave fears that he will not be acquitted. However, they say that where a handsome young fellow is concerned there is always some means of release. . . .

CCXIV

Tuesday night, May 1, 1860.

. . . The ball at Alba's was magnificent. The costumes were unusually beautiful, many of the women uncommonly pretty, and the audacity of the age conspicuously evident. First, the ladies were uncovered in a most outrageous fashion, both above and below. I saw in the waltz a great number of charming feet and not a few garters. Second, crinoline is on the decline. You may take my word that in two years gowns will be worn short, and those blessed with natural advantages may be distinguished from those who must resort to artificial charms. There were an incredible number of English present. The daughter of Lord ——, a charming girl, came as a dryad, nymph, or something mythological, in a gown which would have revealed her entire bosom if it had not been covered by tights. Her dress seemed to me almost as low as that of her mother, whose entire chest was perfectly visible. The ballet of the *Elements* was composed of sixteen women, all extremely pretty, wearing short skirts, and covered with diamonds.

The naiads were powdered with silver, which fell over their shoulders like drops of water.

Empress Eugenie

Reproduced from the original painting

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The [illegible] which fall over their [illegible] of wider.

The Salamanders were sprinkled with gold powder. There was a Mademoiselle Errazu, who was marvellously beautiful. The Princess Mathilde came as a Nubian woman, painted a dark brown color, and with a costume altogether too realistic.

At the height of the ball a domino kissed Madame de S——, who shrieked aloud. The dining-room, with its gallery, the servants dressed as sixteenth century pages, and the brilliant lights, all combined to remind one of Belshazzar's feast, in Martin's painting.

The emperor changed his domino, but any one could have recognised him a league away. The empress wore a white burnoose and a black mask which did not in the least disguise her.

There were many dominoes, which were for the most part immensely ugly. The duke de S—— strutted about like a tree, and the imitation was really excellent. Considering the story told of his wife, the disguise was a little too conspicuous. If you have not heard the story, here it is, in a word. His wife, who was a demoiselle (whose mother, by the way, was to have been my godmother, so I have heard), went to Bapst and bought a tiara costing sixty thousand francs, saying that she would return it the following day if she decided not to take it. She returned noth-

ing, neither money nor tiara. Bapst demanded his diamonds, and was told that they had departed for Portugal, and, to make the story short, they were found finally at the *Mont-de-Piété,* where the *duchesse de* —— reclaimed them for fifteen thousand francs. This is highly commendatory of the times and of women!

Another scandal. At M. d'Aligre's ball a woman was pinched black and blue by a husband who was not less muddled in his head than M. de ——, but who was more violent. The woman screamed and fainted. A general scene followed! They did not throw the jealous man out of the window, which would have been the only sensible thing to do. Good-bye.

CCXV

Saturday, May 12, 1860.

. . . I congratulate you on having beautiful weather and sunshine. Here it rains incessantly, and when it is not raining, the heat is full of humidity. There is a storm in the air, and nervous people like myself are as comfortable as violin cords near the fire. To complete my miseries, I am obliged to stay here until the end of the season, which seems to be far from its close. Now you know all about my plans, and I should

like to have some information about yours, of which I have not even a suspicion.

An amusing thing happened not long ago. M. Boitelle, prefect of police, supposed to be the best-informed man in Paris, learned through the report of his trusty agents that the Minister of State, M. Fould, had spent the night in the house which he had built in the faubourg Saint Honoré. Very early next morning he called to see the minister, shook hands with him warmly, and expressed his interest in what had just happened. M. Fould explained that the matter concerned one of his sons, who was carrying on foolishly in England. The blunder continued for some time, until the prefect of police inquired the name of his successor; when M. Fould explained that he had given a house-warming in his new house, and had not cared to take the trouble to return to the ministerial residence for the night.

The Carlists here are in despair at Montemolin's dulness. There is no doubt that he expected Ortega, before his execution, to be overcome by fear, and to renounce his claims. It would have been nobler on his part to have hastened his work, so that no one should be shot. There is a brother living in England who has not abdicated, and who has children. He is

called ——, and married a daughter of the duke de ——. He stole his wife's diamonds, and with the proceeds supports a chambermaid of the aforesaid. This proves him a man of refined taste.

It seems that Lamoricière is already a little tired of all the worries to which he is subjected in papal territory. Cardinal Antonelli said not long ago to a foreign minister that he had never met a more distinguished man than Lamoricière. "I spoke to him of the present situation, and he suggested at once five or six remedies for the difficulty; he is so eloquent that, in an hour's conversation, he expressed four different opinions on the same question, all of which were so reasonable that I should have found it embarrassing to make a choice."

Every one here is deeply interested in Garibaldi's expedition, and apprehension is felt that it will result in a general complication. M. de Cavour would not, I fancy, be greatly grieved if he should "kick the bucket" in Sicily; but in case he succeeds, he will become ten times more dangerous than at present.

You will be astonished, probably, to learn that I am working and writing as in my good days. When I see you, I shall tell you through what singular circumstance I have shaken off

my traditional idleness. It is too long a story to write, but it has nothing to do with works for your perusal. You must read Granier de Cassagnac's book on the Girondins. It contains the most curious passages and the most horrible descriptions of revolutionary massacres and atrocities, all written with intense passion and fervour.

I received a call a few days ago from M. Feydeau, a very handsome fellow, but whose vanity seems to me to be too outspoken. He is going to Spain to complete the work roughly sketched out by Cervantes and Lesage. He has in view still about thirty novels, the scenes of which are laid in thirty different countries; this is why he travels.

Good-bye. I think of you constantly in spite of all your faults. . . .

CCXVI

CHÂTEAU DE FONTAINEBLEAU, *June 12, 1860.*

Why have you not written to me? For many reasons you should have done so. I have been held here all this week. I shall hope certainly to find you in Paris on my return, for, if the weather has used you as ill as it has us, you will have postponed, doubtless, your visit to the coun-

try. Nevertheless, between the showers we have made several pleasant excursions to the woods; everything is of a uniform spinach-green colour, and when the sun does not shine, it is not bad. There are rocks and heaths which would have some attraction for me if you and I were to walk there together chatting of many things, as we know how to do. But we travel in a long line of waggonettes, in which people are not always paired off for mutual amusement.

On the other hand, in no republic on earth could one enjoy more freedom, nor could host and hostess be more kind to their guests. At the same time, the days have twenty-four hours, four of which at least must be spent in tight pantaloons, which seems a little hard in such muddy, disagreeable weather.

I had a horrible cold when I first came, but, since " God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," my other pains ceased as soon as I began to cough.

I shall not admit for an instant that you will not wait for me. It would be absurd to go to the sea-shore before the weather becomes settled, and, above all, warm. Advise your friends to be patient. I have to do the same thing, and, among others, I say this a hundred times to a person who will listen to nothing. . . . Good-bye. . . .

CCXVII

PARIS, *Sunday night, July 2, 1860.*

I received your letter this morning. The rough sea of which you speak diminishes somewhat my regret for remaining in Paris. It is incredible, however, that this deuced weather should last forever, notwithstanding the sunspots mentioned in the newspapers.

Our session drags out indefinitely, which makes me furious. I have tried to find an excuse to escape, but owing to my supreme importance, which holds me tied here, it is extremely difficult to accomplish. This does not mean that I am not ready at any moment to travel a hundred leagues to dine with you, if I should receive such an invitation, and if some one cared to wait for me. This is a humble suggestion which I take the liberty to make you.

By leaving town so early you will lose a wonderful spectacle, that of observing me pass *in fiocchi,* and black gloves, down the rue de Rivoli, in the midst of the admiring populace.* I do not know how many vacancies this ceremonial will cause in our ranks, but I have grave fears that it will prove advantageous to the un-

* On the occasion of the burial of Prince Jerome.

dertakers. Thirty thousand persons came yesterday to sprinkle themselves with holy water, and more came to-day; a good demonstration of the simplicity of this magnanimous nation! It is more stupid, even, than is supposed, which is saying a great deal.

The Orleanists pretend that M. Brénier was murdered by an angry husband, which, considering the amplitude of his abdomen, seems to me scarcely probable. It is more reasonable to suppose that the *lazzaroni* took this means of avenging their ill-used king. The Liberals, in retaliation, have assassinated the police commissioners, which, of course, has been of great advantage to M. Brénier.

The Italians of the north have none of the emotionalism of the Neapolitans. They have common-sense and theological minds, as Stendhal said, while the Neapolitans are only ill-trained, twelve-year-old children. We shall see, probably, some fine examples of this in the fall, for it looks as if I should go there, instead of to Africa.

I am waiting to hear that your salon is full of country curiosities, and that you yourself are wearing a flowered morning-gown and Turkish slippers. You will think longingly of the muddy streets of Paris. However, I do not care to refer

again to your expedition. Many things may occur to cause you to change your plans. You are acquainted with mine. I shall remain at the British Museum until the end of July, after which I shall spend a few days at Bath, and then go to Scotland, where I shall stay the month of September awaiting an invitation from you. Good-bye.

CCXVIII

PARIS, *Thursday, July 12, 1860.*

Fine weather has at last come to stay. From all indications, I shall leave the beginning of next week. If you have any idea of visiting Lady —— at the sea-shore early in August, I hope that you will let me know of it. Rural England must be very lovely, I fancy, just at this time, and you would enjoy spending a few days with your friend, doing nothing at all, watching the sea and drinking tea beside the open windows. I am still feeling ill. Yesterday especially, I was very uncomfortable. I have my new friend, however, to entertain me. It is an owl I am raising, and which has taken a fancy to me. After dinner I open his cage door and he flies about in my room. For want of small birds, he has learned to catch flies very skilfully. His physiognomy is extremely comical,

and reminds me of self-important people, with his ultra-serious manner and expression.

The funeral was a terrible ordeal. It took us an hour and three-quarters to go from the Palais-Royal to the Invalides. Then there was mass, followed by an oration by the Abbé Cœur, who lauded the principles of '89, saying at the same time that our soldiers were ready to sacrifice their lives in the defence of the pope. He went so far as to say that the first Napoleon did not love war, and was always forced into it for self-defence. The most imposing part of the ceremony was a *De Profundis,* sung in the vaults that you know, and which came to us through a drapery of black crêpe separating us from the tomb. It seems to me that if I were a musician I should profit by the admirable effect produced on tone quality by the use of crêpe, for a grand spectacular opera.

No one is left in Paris. We go at night to the Champs-Élysées to hear Musard's music, and to see the fine ladies and the lorettes, all there together and difficult to distinguish. We go also to the circus to see the trained dogs roll a ball on an inclined plane, jumping up after it. This age is losing all sort of taste for intellectual amusements.

Have you read the book I lent you, and was

it interesting? The *History of Madame de la Guette* pleased me more than *The Holland Jewess,* in which there were things that would have shocked you.

I have been asked to suggest an English novel for a sick man who can read nothing else. Perhaps you may be able to tell me of one. I have just completed a lengthy report on the Library of Paris. It is this, I imagine, that has made me so ill. I waste my time bothering with things in which I am not interested, and business which belongs to others is piled on my shoulders. I have at times wished to write a novel before my death, but sometimes my courage fails me, and again, when I am in the mood, some stupid administrative affairs are given me to attend to. I shall write to you before leaving. . . . Good-bye. . . .

CCXIX

London, *British Museum, July 20, 1860.*

It is certainly very kind of you not to have given me an intimation of life, or a word of farewell before my departure. I shall not forgive you until the next time we meet. I was delayed by all sorts of hindrances, and not until yesterday morning was I able to leave, and in diabolical weather. However, I behaved with heroism dur-

ing the passage, and was almost the only passenger who did not deliver up his soul to the angry waves.

I found the weather here eclipses that of Paris. It always takes me some time to become accustomed to the singular light in London. It has the appearance of passing through a brown gauze. This light, and the absence of curtains at the windows, will annoy me for several days. On the other hand, I am feasted with every sort of good thing, and dined and breakfasted like an ogre, which has not happened in a long, long time. My sole regret is that my little owl is not with me, for it plays about the floor at night like the cat you used to know. 'Tis a pretty creature, I assure you, and has an intelligence out of all proportion to her size, for she is no longer than my hand.

It is distinctly important for me to know definitely, before the end of July, what time you intend to come to Paris, how long you expect to remain, and when you propose to go to Algiers. I must know your plans before forming my own. I need not tell you that you will be the determining motive for me, whether to leave the Highlands earlier, or even whether to go there at all. Do not imagine, and do not even pretend to imagine, that this would be a sacrifice. I should

return to-morrow, if you were to send me word that you were in Paris. You may write to me here until the 30th.

Good-bye. I am very cross, indeed, with you.

CCXX

BATH, *Wednesday night, August 9, 1860.*

I bought you a blue veil before leaving London. I intended to write to you, but had so many commissions to do for my minister, that it would have been on your part an act of charity to come to help me attend to them. I have selected gowns, hats, and ribbons, all of the most fantastic styles I could find. I fear the dogs on the streets of Paris will run after the unfortunate creatures who wear these beautiful objects of my choice.

I am sorry to see you so opposed to a trip to England while I am here. The idea does not strike you. You may be sure that there are no heaths and mountains I should not abandon with delight to see you before your departure. Let us have at least one happy memory ere we leave each other for so long.

The life I have led for a week would make a thorough-bred horse short-winded, running around all day, shopping and visiting; dining out at night with the nabobs, where I always

found the same dishes and almost the same faces. I scarcely knew the names of my hosts, and when they are in white cravats and evening clothes, all Englishmen resemble one another.

We are cordially detested here, and feared even more. Nothing is more amusing than their mistrust of us, which they do not take the trouble to conceal. The volunteers are more stupid even than our National Guard in 1830, because everything in this country is taken with a seriousness found nowhere else. I know a gallant man seventy-five who exercises every day in Zouave costume.

The Ministry is weak and does not know what it wants, and the opposition is no better off; but all, great and small, agree in their belief that we desire to take all we can get. At the same time, every one believes that war will be impossible so long as there is no question of annexing the three kingdoms. I was not specially pleased with the letter of the emperor to M. de Persigny. It would have been better, it seems to me, to say nothing at all, or else to have said merely what I repeat every day, that they are fools.

I advise you to write to me immediately, for I am full of melancholy, and in need of consolation. I shall return to London next Monday.

Write to me: 18 Arlington Street, care of Mr. Ellice. I shall remain but a short time, and shall go with him probably to Glenquoich.

This city is very pretty; there is little smoke, and one sees in every direction hills covered with grass and trees. It is not too cold. The friends with whom I am stopping are people of intelligence, and the baths are doing me good. Goodbye. . . .

CCXXI

LONDON, *August 8, 1860.*

I received your letter just as I was leaving for Glenquoich. It is unnecessary to tell you that it gave me no pleasure; but I shall not reproach you. At this moment I am preoccupied with something else, and that is, to find some means of bidding you farewell. You also must try to manage it so as to gain a little time; and I have no doubt that if we both set our wits to work we shall succeed in meeting and spending a few hours together.

The more I reflect on your expedition to Algeria the more foolish it seems to me. It is evident that with affairs in the Orient complicated as they are, and becoming every moment still more complicated, your brother may be obliged to leave at a moment's notice, and you would find

it embarrassing to remain alone among your Arabs. It seems to me highly probable that the landing of the French troops in Syria will be followed by a general outbreak of robberies and massacres throughout the Orient. It is equally reasonable to suppose that the Turkish provinces of Greece—that is, Thessaly, Macedonia, and Christian Albania—will make some movement in retaliation. Everything in the Orient will be on fire this winter. To go to Algiers at such a time, I repeat, seems to me the height of folly. Still, you might find during this journey some special attraction! Yet you seem now to hesitate about going. . . .

The weather is atrocious. The sun shone yesterday for the first time since I arrived in England, but this morning, on awakening, I heard the beating of the rain upon my window. The barometer indicates a heavy rain, and I can not see a hundred feet away. With all this wind and rain and cold, I do not understand what will become of the wheat. The *Times* says four feet of snow has fallen at Inverness, where I am to spend next Monday night. Do you suppose there will be coal enough and tartans heavy enough to remedy all these miseries?

In spite of the gloomy, cold weather in Bath and its suburbs, I liked the country immensely.

I saw hills standing out in clear outlines against the sky, magnificent trees, and a richness of verdure unequalled elsewhere, unless it is in the valleys of Switzerland. But all this is not to be compared with Saint Cloud or Versailles in fine weather.

Good-bye, dear friend. I am very sad, and I should like to be angry, but I have no energy, so I shall not accuse you. . . .

I send my Glenquoich address, but I shall not be there for several days: In care of the Right Honourable E. Ellice, Glenquoich, Fort Augustus.

CCXXII

GLENQUOICH, *August 22, 1860.*

I am without any news of you. . . .

It is no easy matter to leave this place. Besides the people who detain you, there are certain other difficulties, such as special days for the steam-boats, which carry you over the lakes to the railroad stations. The weather here is almost always abominable, but it does not keep people indoors. They are so accustomed to rain, that if it is not pouring cats and dogs they think they must take a walk. The paths are sometimes torrents; you can not see the mountains a hundred

feet away, but you always return, saying, "*Beautiful walk!*"

The worst thing in this country is a small fly called a midge, which is extremely poisonous. They are very partial to my blood, and devour my face and hands. Stopping here also are two young girls, one a blonde and the other auburn-haired, both with skins like satin, and yet the horrible midges prefer to attack me! Our principal amusement is fishing, which has this advantage, that the midges fear the water and do not venture upon the lake.

There are fourteen persons here. During the day each one goes his own way, and at night, after dinner, we each take a book or write letters. To talk, and to try to entertain one another, are things unknown to the English.

I should be glad to know something of your plans. Write to me in London as soon as you receive this letter. Tell me when you expect to leave, and whether I shall be able to bid you good-bye. I take it for granted that you will do your best that we may spend a few hours together before your long journey.

The Highland air is doing me good. It seems to me that my breathing is better than it was before I came. I can not reconcile myself to eating, which is the principal amusement in this

rainy, foggy weather. Our hunters kill mountain deer, and sometimes grouse, for us, and every day we have choice birds. I am pining for a thin soup, or to dine at home alone, or at Saint Chéron with you; the last wish will not be realised, I fear.

I forget whether I told you that I have a blue veil for you. I have had the courage not to wear it, in order to bring it to you fresh; and if you knew what mountains the midges raise on my face, you would appreciate the strength of mind of which I have given signal proof. Good-bye.

CCXXIII

PARIS, *September 14, 1860.*

I received your letter, dear friend, and confess that I think you might have remained one day less at Lestaque and spent it in Paris . . . .

For nearly two weeks Panizzi has been here with me. I am acting as his guide, and showing him everything worth seeing, from the cedar unto the hyssop. There is not a living creature in Paris, which pleases me mightily; however, the evenings begin to lengthen.

I should like to tell you something of the huge muddle that has just begun, but I know and understand nothing about it. My guest be-

lieves the pope and the Austrians will be driven out. So far as the first is concerned, the chances look very gloomy; as for the Austrians, if Garibaldi interferes with them I fear he will repent of it. Some one in Naples wrote me of a philosophical remark of the king, who was receiving every five minutes the resignation of a general or an admiral: "To-day there are too many Italians to fight against Garibaldi; in a month there will be too many Royalists to fight against the Austrians."

It is impossible to picture the rage of the Carlists and the Orleanists. A very sensible Italian tells me that M. de Cavour entered the Papal States with the Sardinian army because Mazzini was preparing to organise a revolution there. To my mind, this has a semblance of probability.

You have seen, perhaps, the fête at Marseilles. It was, I am told, unusually beautiful, and the enthusiasm was both circumspect and tumultuous. I hear also that, notwithstanding an immense multitude of people excited to the highest degree, and of hot Southern temperament, perfect order prevailed. To find something to eat seemed to be the greatest problem, and somewhere to sleep almost as difficult. The spectacle of the Marseillais in their ordinary condition

always amuses me; to see them in a state of enthusiasm must be still more entertaining. On this account, and for another reason which you may guess, I regret not having been in Marseilles or in the neighbourhood.

Panizzi, who is an ardent traveller, is thinking of going to Turin for a week, and urges me to accompany him. It is a great temptation, but I dare not yield. It seems to me a delicate matter to make a visit to M. de Cavour, and, perhaps, Garibaldi, and in the uncertainty I shall decide wisely to decline.

I shall give you a great many commissions to do for me at Algiers, when you have settled down there. You know the sort of things that suit me, and whenever you come across any such things do not lose the chance of a bargain. I suggest, especially, that you find me a characteristic dressing-gown. I should like, also, for you to make the acquaintance of the women of the country, and tell me frankly all you have seen and heard.

My owlet is still very friendly, but, to my sorrow, most untidy. When put in her cage, she becomes despondent, but she abuses her liberty. I do not know what to do about it. She does not wish to escape and fly away.

I am going with Panizzi to-morrow to Dis-

dér's to have my photograph taken. I will send you one of my pictures. They tried it at Glenquoich, but there is so little light in that land that the result was nothing but a shadowy something surmounted by a well-outlined cap. I am not specially pleased with your photograph.

Good-bye, dear friend. For a week we have had lovely weather, but chilly. From noon, however, until four o'clock the sun shows his face, which is such a rare spectacle this year that we consider ourselves fortunate.

Good-bye. Keep well, take care of yourself, and think sometimes of me.

CCXXIV

September 17, 1860.

I write at once to tell you that I have just received your letter of the 13th of this month. I notice that you complain of not receiving any letters from me, and this I do not understand at all. There is something mysterious in the matter, which I am unable to explain.

I congratulate you on having had a successful voyage. Mine was not so good, because it was shorter, I suppose, but this applies only to the letters from Marseilles. Everybody lost his head, I fancy, during the emperor's visit, and

service of all kind was suspended. A Marseilles merchant, to whom I wrote for a very pressing order, replied yesterday, that on account of the fêtes he had not had time to attend to my consignment. No one, apparently, went to his business house.

For several days the weather has been delightful. I should have taken advantage of it, probably, to say farewell to the country, but for the fact that my friend Panizzi has been with me. I packed him off yesterday to Turin, where he will remain only a few days. He will return by the end of the week.

Since my visit to Scotland I have been in better health, only I sleep badly. I envy you the spectacle you will see—the Arabian excursion which will have a certain element of strangeness. You must give me a minute description of it.

Good-bye, dear friend. Will you kindly write to me as soon as you have received my letter? Tell me what you think of those lost or retarded letters, and give me your orders in regard to the small package I have to send you. I have refrained from trying to find a way of sending it, because I felt confident that you would suggest one. Good-bye. Take good care of yourself. . . .

CCXXV

PARIS, *October 7, 1860.*

DEAR FRIEND: Your letters have arrived finally, and reassure me concerning the fate of mine. You are right to accuse the Marseillais of losing their heads during the emperor's visit. They lost also two small casks of Spanish wine which had been sent to me, and which have remained in the warehouse, goodness knows how long! The Marseillais wine-merchant who was to receive them wrote me naïvely that he had been too busily engaged with the celebration to think of my wine, and that he could not attend to it until he had taken a little rest.

I understand perfectly the fascination and interest with which you are inspired by a first view of oriental life. You say very truly that at every step you discover some things that are comical and others that are admirable. There is, indeed, something comical always in the Orientals, as there is in certain strange and pompous animals in the Jardin des Plantes. Descamps has seized exactly this grotesqueness of the oriental, but he has failed to catch the noble and beautiful side of their character.

I thank you very much for your descriptions,

only they are rather incomplete. You have enjoyed the rare privilege of seeing Mussulman women, and you do not tell me that which I should like to know. Do they make in Algeria, as in Turkey, a generous exhibition of their charms? I remember to have seen the bust of the present Sultan's mother as plainly as I have seen your face. I should like to know, also, the character of the dances which you saw, if they were modest, and, if not, explain why not.

If you will suggest a way of sending the package I have for you, I will despatch it at once; if you have not received it by the time you return to Marseilles I will send it off by the first steam-boat to leave. I should be glad if you would buy something for my use. You know what I like, and I leave the choice, therefore, to your powers of divination.

I have been to Saintonge for a few days, and returned only yesterday. The weather was uninterruptedly abominable, and I brought back an extinguished voice and a frightful cold. I found the people there profoundly distressed, and weeping their eyes out over the misfortunes of the Holy Father and General Lamoricière. General Changarnier has given a description of his colleague's campaign, in which, I am told, after praising him to the skies, he shows him to

have been guilty of huge blunders. In my opinion the only one of the martyr heroes who is not ridiculous is Pimodan, who died like a brave soldier. Those who pose as martyrs because they were taken prisoner are rascals on whom I waste no pity. The present times, moreover, are perfectly absurd, and it does me good to read my newspaper every morning to learn of some new catastrophe, to read the remarks of Cavour or the encyclicals. I see that Walker was shot in America, which caused me some surprise, for his case is similar to that of Garibaldi, whom we all admire.

Did you think my photograph a good resemblance? I enclose a better one, or, at least, one with a less lugubrious expression. I should be glad to give you some news of Paris, but no one is here. I envy you for being in the sunshine.

If you have any commissions for me, I shall be in Paris still a month or more. You do not mention the cooking of the country. Do you have anything good to eat? If so, get the recipe.

Good-bye, dear friend.

CCXXVI

PARIS, *October 16, 1860.*

DEAR FRIEND: I received yours of the 5th by slow transportation. I imagine there was one of those wind-storms of which the newspaper tells every morning. The Mediterranean is playing tricks, it seems, this year. I envy you the sunshine and warmth which you enjoy. Here there is constant rain or fog; sometimes it is warm and humid, more frequently cold and humid, but always as disagreeable as possible.

Paris is still completely empty of people. I spend my evenings reading, and sometimes sleeping. Night before last, wishing to hear some music, I went to the Italian opera. They gave *The Barber of Seville.* This music, which is the gayest ever written, was sung by people who acted as if they were returning from a funeral. Mademoiselle Alboni, who was *Rosine,* sang admirably, with the notes of a bird. Gardoni sang like a gentleman who was afraid of being mistaken for an actor. If I had been Rossini, it seems to me I should have shaken them all. The *Basile* was the only one (I can not remember his name) who sang as if he had any appreciation of the words.

You have promised to give me a minute and circumstantial description of quantities of interesting things which I am unable to see. Thanks to the privileges of your sex, you have access to the harems and may converse with the women. I should like to know how they are dressed, what they do, what they say, what they think of you. You have mentioned, also, the dances. I fancy they are immensely more interesting than those one sees in Paris ball-rooms, but you will be obliged to describe them with the utmost exactness. Do you understand the significance of what you see? You are aware that everything which bears on the history of mankind is full of interest to me. Why will you not put on paper all you see and hear?

I do not know whether we are to go to Compiègne this year. They tell me the empress, whom I have not seen, is still in the depths of woe. She sent me a charming photograph of the duchess of Alba, taken more than twenty-four hours after her death. She appears to be sleeping tranquilly. Her death was very peaceful. She laughed at the Valencian dialect of her waiting-women five minutes before she died. I have heard no direct news from Madame de Montijo since her departure, but I have grave fears that the poor woman will not recover from this blow.

I am deep in a great academic intrigue. It has nothing to do with the French Academy, but with the Academy of Fine Arts. A friend of mine is a preferred candidate, but his Majesty has compelled him to decline, to give place to M. Haussmann, the prefect. The Academy is indignant, and wishes to nominate my friend, notwithstanding his withdrawal. I am giving it all the encouragement in my power, and should like to be able to tell the emperor the harm he is doing in meddling in affairs that do not concern him. I hope I shall succeed in the end, and that the big colossus will be black-balled in good fashion.

Italian affairs are most amusing, and what is said among the few honest folk in Paris is still more diverting. We are beginning to see the arrival of a few of the martyrs of Castilfidardo. As a general thing they do not speak too enthusiastically of Lamoricière, who could not have been as great a hero as he was advertised.

I saw, a few days ago, the aunt of a young eighteen-year-old martyr who had been made prisoner. She told me that the Piedmontese had treated her nephew abominably. I waited to hear her relate something horrible.

"Only fancy, monsieur, five minutes after being made a prisoner the poor boy had his watch

taken from him—a gold hunting-case watch, too, that I had given him!"

Good-bye, dear friend. Write to me often. Tell me what you are doing, and many details.

CCXXVII

PARIS, *October 24, 1860.*

DEAR FRIEND: I received your letter of the 15th. I have delayed a reply because I have been in the country, at my cousin's, where I walked during the day and played backgammon at night. In fact, I have been very lazy. I thank you for the descriptions you gave me, but they need a running commentary and illustrations, especially what you say concerning the native dances; from what you tell me, they must resemble somewhat the dances of the gitanas of Grenada. The idea is probably the same as that represented by the Moors. I have no doubt that if an Arab of the Sahara should see a waltz in Paris, he would conclude, very reasonably, that the French also use pantomime. When one goes to the bottom of things one discovers always the same original ideas. You have observed this when you studied mythology with me.

I do not at all acknowledge the timidity of your explanations. You have at your disposal

euphemisms enough to tell me everything, and you act as you do only that I may plead and insist. Come, be more communicative in your next letter.

I am becoming worse and worse every day. I begin to be resigned to my fate, but it is a lamentable thing to see one's self growing old and dying by inches.

You ask me to explain the present disorders. Are you not sick of it? Unfortunately, no one understands anything of it. Read the *Constitutionnel* of to-day. There is an interesting and inspired article by Guéronnière. He says, in substance: "I can not approve the attack made on innocent people; yet, on the other hand, I have no interest in those who are being skinned, and do not desire to see them aided in any way save in advice."

I went yesterday to Saint Cloud, where I had lunch most informally with the emperor, the empress, and "*Monsieur fils,*" as they say in Lyons. Everybody was in good health and high spirits. I had a long conversation with the emperor, particularly on ancient history and Cæsar. The facility with which he grasps the meaning of erudite subjects, for which he has found a taste only recently, is most astonishing.

The empress related several curious incidents

connected with her trip to Corsica. The bishop had told her of a bandit named Bosio, whose history might have been copied from *Colomba*. He is a worthy fellow, who has been persuaded by the advice of a woman to commit two or three trifling crimes. For several months they have been trying to capture him, but in vain; women and children suspected of furnishing him food have been imprisoned, but it is impossible to lay hands on him. No one knows where he is. Her Majesty, who has read the novel that you know, had become interested in this man, and said she would be delighted if some one should give him the wherewithal to leave the island and go to Africa or elsewhere, where he might become a good soldier and an honest man. "Ah! Madame," said the bishop, "will you permit me to send this message to him?"

"Then, monseigneur, you know where he is?" As a general rule, the very worst scamps in Corsica are always connected in some way with the most respectable men. They were greatly surprised to find that, while they were besought to grant a prodigious number of favours, no one asked for a sou. The empress has returned full of enthusiasm.

The meeting at Warsaw is a fiasco. The Austrian emperor went uninvited, and discovered

an example of the kind of courtesy shown presumptuous persons. He pretended to demonstrate that if Austria was in danger from Hungary, Russia also had an enemy in Poland; to which Gortchakoff replied: "You have eleven millions of Hungarians, and you are three million Germans. We are forty million Russians, and need no help to bring to reason six millions of Poles. Consequently there is no mutual confidence."

It seems to me that, so far as Germany is concerned, things look peaceable, and it is possible, nay, even probable, that she might make us overtures to pursue the same course in respect to Italy. If this should occur, war, I think, would be impossible, unless, however, Garibaldi should make an attack upon Venice; yet the Italians are more prudent than is supposed.

I hear from Naples that the turmoil there is at its climax, and that the Piedmontese are expected with the same impatience that we experienced in 1848, when we were looking for the arrival of the regular troops in Paris. It is for order that they sigh, and which they will not realise except under Victor Emmanuel. Garibaldi and Alexander Dumas have prepared the way for it, just as a journey in the cold and rain prepares one to enjoy a warm dinner.

Good-bye, dear friend. I am thinking of starting soon to Cannes. Upon reaching Marseilles, about the middle of November, I shall intrust your package to the office of the steamship company. Give me details of the customs, and have no fear of shocking me. Take good care of yourself, and do not forget me.

CCXXVIII

November 1, 1860, at night.

I have received yours, No. 7, dear friend, and it is evident that the country and the climate still please you. I dread the time when the sight of a man in a burnoose will seem to you such a matter of course that you will pay no attention to it. The French colony, of which you make mention, must be as interesting as that one which went out from France during the first Under-Prefecture. Do they wear much crinoline at the Government Palace? or is it going out of fashion, as in Paris? It seems to me that I can foretell your reply.

You have given me only sketches of Algerian customs, when I desire the most exact details. I can not conceive why you will not enter into all the explanations for which I ask. There is nothing you need hesitate to tell me, and, be-

sides, you are justly celebrated for your use of euphemism. Your style is truly academic. I shall understand your allusions, only I should like to have details; otherwise I shall be no wiser than the rest of the world. I wish to know all that you have acquired, for this, I am sure, is well worth the trouble of telling. If you really learn Arabic, I congratulate you on your courage; it requires a vast amount of it. I stuck my nose once in M. de Sacy's Grammar, and withdrew in dismay. There were, I recollect, lunar letters and solar letters, and verbs of I know not how many conjugations. Besides, it is a dull language, which one can pronounce just as well gagged. My cousin, who is one of the most learned of Arabists, and who has spent twenty-five years in Egypt, told me that he never opened a book without learning a new word, and that there were, for instance, five hundred words signifying *lion*.

A week ago I sent you a lengthy dissertation on the political situation. It seems that no change in conditions has occurred. To date, the facts in the case are: First, that the conference at Warsaw was a complete fiasco; second, that Austria feels herself in no condition to assume the offensive, in spite of the fact that her enemy is making fine sport of her.

Everything is complicated by the situation in the East. It is so bad that our ambassador at Constantinople believes the old machine may crack any day at all from top to bottom. The Sultan is selling his valuables; he does not know whether he shall be able to buy his dinner next month. Have you heard what were the first words of emperor Francis Joseph to the emperor Alexander? "I bring you my sinful head!" This is the formula used by the Russian serf who approaches his master expecting and dreading a beating. He said the words in good Russian, for he speaks all the European languages. His humility was not eminently successful; he received from Alexander only the most unpromising coldness, and, following the latter's example, the Prince Regent of Prussia also carried his head high. After the departure of the emperor Alexander, the Austrian emperor remained in Warsaw alone for four hours, and not a single great Russian or Polish lord came to pay their respects to him. The conservative Russians are immensely pleased at all this, for they detest the Austrians even more than they do the English or ourselves.

You will hear of our victory over those poor Chinese. How ridiculous it seems to go so far away to kill people who have done nothing to

us! 'Tis true, however, that the Chinese, being a variety of the orang-outang, there is none but the Grammont law which may be invoked in their favour.

I am preparing for our conquests in China by reading a new novel, which has just been translated by Stanislas Julien, the Chinese patentee of our government. It is the story of two young ladies, *Mademoiselle Cân* and *Mademoiselle Ting,* who are very clever, for they make verses and rhymes about everything. They meet two students who write with the same facility, and there follows an endless combat of quatrains. In all these quatrains there is nothing but white swallows and blue lotus flowers. It is impossible to find anything more whimsical and more destitute of passion. Evidently people who enjoy that style of literature are abominable pedants, who deserve to be thoroughly conquered and whipped by us, who take precedence over the beautiful Greeek literature.

We had several summer days—Saint Martin's summer, I think they call it—then cold weather set in. I am beginning to dream of Provence, where, according to the local astrologers, we are promised a beautiful winter. I shall soon inform you of my change of residence. For three days I have been unable to breathe.

You have told me nothing of the cooking of the country. How do you like *couscousson?* Do you find in the bazaars any unusual curiosities, and are the prices reasonable? I dined yesterday at Prince Napoleon's. Princess Clotilde admired my cuff-buttons, and asked the jeweller's address. I told her "rue d'Alger, No. 10." Is that right? Good-bye, dear friend.

CCXXIX

MARSEILLES, *November 17, 1860.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have just arrived at Marseilles, and find that a boat for Algiers leaves in an hour. I shall confide to it the little package for you. I have only time to say good-morning. My cold is giving me horrible distress. In a few days I shall be in Cannes, and shall make a visit in the suburbs. Write to me at Cannes when you have received the little package.

I am too hurried to tell you any news. The visit of the empress * is giving rise to a great deal of gossip, and no one understands its significance. The outlook is for peace, which is highly probable, until we find out which is the stronger, Garibaldi or Cavour.

* To Scotland.

MARSEILLES, *November 18, 1860.*

Unfortunately, it was too late! The boats are advertised to leave at four o'clock, and they leave at noon. My small package will leave without fail next Tuesday, and my letter will leave, probably, by the same steamer.

And now that this important business is terminated, I resume my questions. Have you been to see the Moorish baths? What kind of women did you see there? I imagine their habit of sitting with crossed legs must give them horrible knees. If you do not approve of their fashions in dress, I suppose that you will adopt their *kohl* for the eyes. Besides being very pretty, its use is also said to be an excellent preventive of ophthalmia, a disease which is frequent and dangerous for European eyes in warm climates. I give you, therefore, my authority to use this article.

I am sorry to hear of the death of poor Lady M——, who was a good woman notwithstanding her opinions on people and things. Is it a fact that she has written a book, a volume of travels, or a novel? I do not know which, but I heard it well spoken of in England.

My Glenquoich friend, Mr. Ellice, is to be my neighbour this winter. He has just bought,

for one hundred and twenty thousand pounds sterling, an estate in Scotland adjoining his own, or, rather, it consists of leagues of lakes, rocks, and heaths. I can not imagine what he expects to gain by the purchase, except grouse and deer in the hunting season. It seems to me, if I had three millions to put in land, I should prefer to spend them in the south rather than the north.

I am bringing with me a new edition of Pushkin's works, of which I have promised to write a review. I have begun to read his lyric poems, and find in them many superb things, quite after my own heart—that is to say, in their sincerity and simplicity they are modelled after the Greek. Several of them are deeply passionate, and I should like to translate them, for in these, as in many others, in precision and clearness, the work seems to me of a very high order. Something in the style of Sappho's ode, *Δέδυχε μὲν ά σελάνα*, reminds me that I am writing at night, in an inn chamber, and my mind is full of reminiscences of the good old days. Of all the petty miseries of the present, the worst for me is insomnia. All my thoughts grow pessimistic, and I become absolutely disgusted with myself.

Good-bye, dear friend. Try to keep well and to sleep. You have much finer weather than we, and much more cheerful companions. Do you

eat any bananas in Algiers? To my mind, it is the best fruit in the world, but I should like to eat it with you. With this thought, dear friend, I bid you good-night. I shall reach Cannes about the 25th of this month.

CCXXX

CANNES, *December 13, 1860.*

You write with a conciseness quite Lacedemonian, and you use, moreover, a paper manufactured, doubtless, expressly for you. At the same time, there are many interesting things, for you to tell me. You are living among barbarians, where there is always something worth observing; and you have the best kind of a chance to see them, because of the woman's skirts you wear, which are a valuable passport. In spite of this, you have told me but one thing in detail, and that I had already suspected, but you have not said what you thought of it and whether you considered it worthy of imitation. You must have seen in the bazaars a tremendous number of trinkets, and you might have examined them and have given me some idea of what you thought would suit me. In fact, you are not acquitting yourself at all well in your rôle of traveller.

I am living in my hole, and have nothing to tell you except that we had, in the beginning of

the month, the most diabolical weather. The Siagne, a small stream flowing between the Estérel Mountain and Cannes, overflowed its banks and covered the adjacent fields, which gave them the most curious and picturesque aspect. The sea, too, driven by the south wind, beat against my balcony, and my house during the night was transformed into an island. All these disasters were effaced by one day of sunshine. I am warm, and am tolerably well, but I sleep badly, and have lost entirely the habit of eating. All the same, I take more exercise than I did in Paris.

The political disturbance early in the month gave me some apprehension, notwithstanding my indifference to the questions involved. You are aware of my intimacy with the principal victim. I know nothing positively as yet concerning the reasons for his disgrace. It is evident, however, that a fair lady figures in the case, and that she persisted in remaining in his apartment, which she had occupied for a long time. He took the thing less philosophically than I believed he would, and than I should have done in his place. I fancy, though, that he was cut up by some of the proceedings.

As for the measures of the Liberals, I have not made up my mind what to think; we must wait, and see the result. I do not believe they

were necessary; but, on principle, it is better to grant a favour unsolicited than to give only what is asked, and after delaying so long that everybody concerned grows impatient. It may be, on the other hand, that the emperor * is seeking support in the Chambers in order that we may abandon our false position with Italy, defending a pope who excommunicates us *in petto,* and on the point of becoming embroiled with our friends, that we may flatter the vanity of a youngster who has never wished us any good. It is clear that, if the Chambers recommend the doctrine of non-intervention, it would be ground sufficient to recall General de Goyon from Rome, and to leave the Piedmontese to fight their own battles as they like and as they are able to do.

Here, meaning throughout France, people who dress well and consider themselves somebody are loyal to the pope and the king of Naples, as if they had not been at the bottom of the Revolution in France. At the same time, their love of the papacy and of legitimacy does not reach to the extent of contributing an *écu* in their behalf. If a positive explanation were demanded, I do not doubt that the doctrine of intervention would be extolled in enthusiastic terms. But what will be the effect of the re-

* The emperor of Austria.

crudescence of eloquence which the recent concessions will bring on us? I can not guess the result; but the old parliamentarians are beginning to prick their ears. M. Thiers, I am told, will stand for election to a seat in the Senate from Valenciennes, and his example, I think, will be followed by many others. I can not concieve what will become of the deposed ministers, who were appointed by the oratorical party in the legislative body of the Senate, but it will be amusing to see orators like M. Magne and M. Billault on the side of the Jules Favre and *tutti quanti.*

Good-bye, dear friend. Let me hear from you often, and send me longer letters. Do not forget the details of Algerian customs, about which I am exceedingly curious. Tell me what sort of weather you have, and how you are.

CCXXXI

CANNES, *December 28, 1860.*

DEAR FRIEND: I wish you a happy ending of the old and a happier beginning of the new year. I thank you for the pretty purse which you sent me. Did I say purse? I do not know exactly what it is, or what it is to be used for; but it is very pretty, and the gold embroidery,

in different colours, is in exquisite taste. It takes the barbarians to make such things. Our artificers have too much acquired skill and too little sentiment to make anything equal to them.

I thank you for the offer of the dates and bananas. If I were in Paris, I should not refuse, but you can not conceive of the carelessness of our transportation. I waited a whole week for a pair of trousers, begging your pardon, which went from Marseilles to Nice, and from there God knows where, before they finally reached me. Things to eat would be still more uncertain. When you return you may bring them with you, and we shall eat them together, which will be much nicer.

You have not told me if you saw M. Feydeau in Algiers. I met him in the railway train coming from Africa, where he had gone, he told me, to write a novel. Although I have said no more about it, you promised me to collect data for me, and to gather a multitude of facts for my use in the future.

You have confined yourself to giving me the most superficial information, without telling me even your own opinion of things. Have you seen in Algiers a sort of pouch which comes from Constantine, I think, something like the *sabretache* worn by our hussars, and embroidered in

a marvellous fashion? About how much do they cost? I mean the most beautiful ones.

Cannes is filled with English and Russians, all of whom are exceedingly ordinary specimens. My friend Mr. Ellice is in Nice, and comes to see me from time to time. He complains of having no intellectual associates.

I see that you have had a visit from Mr. Cobden. He is an intelligent man and very interesting, not like an Englishman, in that he is never heard talking commonplaces and has not many prejudices. It seems that Paris is entirely absorbed in M. Poinsot. They say that he himself is responsible for his misfortune.

I should be glad to give you some political news, but my correspondents tell me nothing, except that affairs are quiet. It is the characteristic of our age to set in motion a turmoil, and to amuse one's self while it is in progress.

Good-bye. Keep in good health, and enjoy your sunshine.

CCXXXII

NICE, *January 20, 1861.*

I am here on a visit to my friend Mr. Ellice, who is a cruel sufferer from gout, and whom I have come to cheer. I experienced a feeling of involuntary satisfaction when I crossed the *Pont*

du Var, and found neither customs officer nor gendarme, nor a demand for passports. This annexation is a fine thing, and makes one feel several millimetres taller.

You confuse me terribly with the beautiful things which you describe. It is evident that I must fall back on you and on your judgment to decide on the purchases; but I beg you to consider that as these things are for my personal use, and not for gifts, I shall be much more difficult to please than usual. I urge you, therefore, to proceed with great circumspection. *Primo,* you are authorised to purchase a *gebira* at any price you care to pay, provided that it has gold not on the outside, but on the inside, like some of those I have seen.

If you find some pretty silk stuff which may be washed, and does not look like a woman's gown, make me a dressing-gown, as long as possible, and buttoned on the left side in the oriental fashion. Bring these with you when you return. I have no desire to wear silk gowns while the ice in the Seine is two feet thick. What they write me from Paris makes my hair stand on end —ten degrees of cold during the day, and twelve or fourteen degrees at night. Nevertheless, I am summoned there day after to-morrow. Do not be frightened if you read in the papers that I am

ill. It would be, however, only the truth, for I have been not at all well for some time.

If I were to return to Paris at this season I am sure I should be done for in a few days. I am thinking, however, of going about the middle of February. Besides my usual alacrity in attending the functions of the Luxembourg, I have a speech to deliver. A petition is presented for the revision of M. Libri's trial, and you may be sure that I can not refrain from speaking my mind upon this subject which lies so near my heart.

I have had at Cannes—I might say I am still having—a visit from M. Fould, for I shall find him still there on my return day after to-morrow. He told me many curious things of the men and women who were interested in his affair. I found him much more philosophical than I expected. I doubt, however, if he has the courage to sulk much longer; it is contrary to his habit. It seems that when one has for a long time carried a red portfolio under his arm, one finds himself, on losing it, in exactly the same condition as an Englishman with no umbrella.

Good-bye. I shall leave Cannes, probably, February 8th. Let me hear from you, and tell me something of your plans for returning, if you have made any. We are having fine weather,

but it might be warmer. You seem to have weather both clear and warm, for which I congratulate you. Good-bye, dear friend. . . .

CCXXXIII

CANNES, *February 16, 1861.*

DEAR FRIEND: I am writing you in the blues, and in the midst of my preparations for departure. I am to start to-morrow morning, and, if I succeed in reaching Toulon in time for the train, expect to be in Paris the following night. I had hoped to prolong my stay here until the conclusion of the inquiry; but, on the one hand, I have had conferred on me an honour which I could very well have done without, and which compels me to be punctual. Besides this, I am told that the Senate is papist and legitimist, and that my voice will not be out of place when the vote is taken. This sort of thing is repugnant to me, and if it can be done, I shall keep out of it as long as possible.

These last days I have had quantities of visitors, which has prevented me from writing to you. I have had friends from Paris, and Mr. Ellice, who came to spend several days with me, so that it became necessary to play the cicerone, to take them everywhere in the suburbs, and to

hold a plenary court. Contrary to my custom, therefore, I am bringing back with me very few drawings.

Your absence from Paris has been the cause of two misfortunes. The first is, that I forgot entirely the gift of books for Madame de Lagréné's daughters. In the next place, I forgot also Sainte-Eulalie. There is nothing in this country which could have been sent to Paris, except flowers, and God only knows in what condition they would have reached there. Do advise me what to do. I am as embarrassed as usual, and this time I have not the resource of throwing my trouble on your shoulders.

I am grateful to you for all the trouble you are taking about the *gebira*. I should like it a little large, because I expect to wear it in my journeys as a night-robe.

The poor duchesse de Malakof is an excellent woman, but not over-clever, especially in French. She seems to be altogether dominated by her frightful beast of a husband, who is boorish from habit, and, perhaps, from choice. They say, however, that she adapts herself to him remarkably well. If you see her, mention me, and our dramatic entertainments in Spain. I was told that her brother, who is a very pleasant fellow, good-looking, and a poet in the bargain,

was to spend some time with her in Algiers. Good-bye, dear friend. Keep well, and take care of yourself.

CCXXXIV

PARIS, *March 21.*

DEAR FRIEND: I thank you for your letter. Since my return to Paris, I have been completely besotted. There was, in the first place, our exhibition in the Senate, where like M. Jourdain, I may say that never have I been so satiated with silliness. Everybody had in reserve a discourse to which he had to give utterance. So strong is the contagion of example, that I delivered my speech in a free-and-easy way, without the slightest preparation, like M. Robert Houdin. I was terribly frightened, but succeeded in overcoming it by saying to myself that I was in the presence of two hundred imbeciles, and that there was no occasion to be nervous. The joke was that M. Walewski, to whom I wished to give a fine budget, took offence because I praised his predecessor, and declared openly that he had voted against my proposition.

M. Troplong, beside whom I was seated in my position as secretary, whispered to me his condolences; to which I replied that a minister

who is not thirsty can not be compelled to drink. This was repeated immediately to M. Walewski, who took it for an epigram, and who since then has scowled on me, which has not prevented me from going my own gait.

The second vexation of the present time is to dine out, officially or otherwise, on the same fish, the same filet, the same lobster, and so on, and even the same persons, all as tiresome as they were the last time.

But the climax of vexations is Catholicism. You can not conceive of the degree of exasperation which the Catholics have reached. For nothing at all they jump on you—for instance, if you do not, at the mention of the holy martyr, show all the whites of your eyes, and if you ask quite *innocently,* as I did, who had suffered martyrdom.

I brought on myself another unfortunate affair in expressing surprise that the queen of Naples had had her photograph taken in boots. It is an exaggeration and an absurdity which surpasses anything which you may imagine.

A lady asked me the other evening if I had ever seen the empress of Austria. I said I considered her very pretty. "Ah, she is an ideal beauty!" "No; she has irregular features, which are more pleasing, perhaps, than if they

mere more regular." "Ah, monsieur, she is beauty personified. Tears of admiration come to your eyes!" This is the society of the present day. I flee from it, therefore, as I should the plague. What has become of the French society of the past!

A final vexation, but a colossal one, was *Tannhäuser*. Some say the performance was one of the secret conditions of the Treaty of Villafranca; others, that Wagner was sent to us in order to force us to admire Berlioz. The fact is that it is monstrous. It seems to me I might compose something just as good to-morrow, inspired by my cat walking over the piano board.

The performance was very strange. The Princess Metternich got herself terribly worked up to make the impression that she understood it, and to create applause, which came not. Everybody yawned, but at the same time, everybody wished to appear to understand this unanswerable enigma. The people who sat beneath Madame de Metternich's *loge* said that the Austrians were taking their revenge for Solferino. It was said also that people were tired of the *récitatifs,* and that *on se tanne aux airs.** Try to understand the joke. I fancy your Arabic

* They were bored with the melodies. It is impossible to translate the pun into English.—TRANSLATOR.

music is an excellent preparation for this infernal noise. It is an immense fiasco! Auber says that it is Berlioz without melody.

The weather here is frightful—wind, rain, snow, and hail, varied by flashes of sunshine which do not last ten minutes. The sea is still raging, it seems, and I am glad you are not returning immediately.

Did I tell you that I had made the acquaintance of M. Blanchard, who is going to move into the rue de Grenelle? He showed me some charming water-colours, Russian and Asiatic scenes, which seemed to show a great deal of temperament, and which were done with talent and fire.

I should like to send you some news, but know of nothing worth sending across the sea. I am persuaded that the pope will leave before the end of two months, or else that we shall settle him where he can come to terms with the Piedmontese; but affairs can not endure as they are. The devout are making a horrible outcry; but the French people and the bourgeois are anti-papists. I hope and believe that Isidore shares my sentiments on this point.

I shall make a short journey, probably, in the south, in the company of my ex-minister, to spend the dreary Easter season. You tell me

nothing about your health, about your complexion. Your health, I trust, is good; as to the other, I fear you have not sunburned at all.

Good-bye, dear friend. I thank you for the *gebira*. Return well and strong; stout or slender, I promise to recognise you. I embrace you most tenderly.

CCXXXV

PARIS, *April 2, 1861.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have just returned from my holy-week excursion, tired out, after a sleepless and bitter cold night. I find your letter here, and am delighted to learn that you are on this side of the sea. . . .

I have been in better health for two weeks. Some one recommended a very agreeable remedy for my pains in the stomach. It is called pearls of ether. They are small capsules made of I don't know what, which are transparent, and contain the liquid ether. You swallow them, and an instant after reaching the stomach they break, and let the ether escape. The effect is a queer, agreeable sensation. If you should ever need a sedative, I recommend them to you.

You must have been sadly struck with the wintry aspect of southern France, coming as you did from Africa. Whenever I return from

Cannes I am always shocked at the appearance of the bare trees and the moist, dead earth. I am awaiting your *gebira* with the keenest interest. If the embroidery is as marvellous as that on the tobacco pouch which you sent me, it must be admirable indeed. I hope you have brought back some gowns for yourself, and quantities of pretty things which you will show me.

I do not know whether there are as many good Catholics at —— as there are in Paris. The fact is, our drawing-rooms are no longer inhabitable. Not only have those who were always devout become bitter as verjuice, but all the ex-Voltairians of the political opposition have turned papists. I find consolation in the thought that some of them feel obliged to attend mass, which must be somewhat of a bore to them. My former professor, M. Cousin, who used never to speak of the pope other than as the bishop of Rome, has been converted and does not miss a mass. It is said, even, that M. Thiers is becoming pious, but it is difficult for me to believe this, because I have always been partial to him.

I can understand that you may not be able now to tell me, even indefinitely, when you intend to return to Paris, but let me hear as soon as you know anything to tell. I shall be tied here as long as the session continues. . . .

Tell me, dear friend, how you are after so many fatigues and tribulations on land and sea. Good-bye. Take good care of yourself, and write to me promptly and often. . . .

CCXXXVI

PARIS, *Wednesday, April 24, 1861.*

I am writing the history of a bandit Cossack of the seventeenth century, named Stenka Razine, who was killed in Moscow with horrible tortures, after he had hanged and drowned a great number of boyards, and had maltreated their women in true Cossack fashion. I will let you read it when it is finished, if I ever reach the end of it. Good-bye, dear friend. Give me news of yourself. . . .

I am leading a most disquieting and uncomfortable life, thanks to the Institute affairs and the petition of Madame Libri. . . .

CCXXXVII

PARIS, *May 15, 1861* (*The Senate*).

DEAR FRIEND: For several days I have been so busy that I have delayed writing to you. I wished to ask you to return my visit. I am a prey at the present moment of the herrings

which the seals of Boulogne have stirred up to torment us, and I am expecting the Maronites to finish us. This means that we, in this establishment,* are in the midst of a bitter discussion about herrings, and that we are threatened with daily sessions. However, it can not last much longer, I hope.

I am working every night, and am happy to have reached the tortures which my hero was made to suffer, so you see I am near the end. It is a long work, not very interesting, and most horrible. I will let you read it when it is published. What do you think of Macaulay? Is he as interesting as in the beginning?

Is it true that all the herring fishermen of Boulogne are thieves, who buy herrings caught by the English and pretend to have caught them themselves? Is it true, also, that the herrings have been seduced by the English, and that they no longer pass near our coasts?

CCXXXVIII

CHÂTEAU DE FONTAINEBLEAU,

Thursday, June 13, 1861.

DEAR FRIEND: For two days I have been here, recuperating, with great enjoyment, among

* The Senate.

the trees, after my tribulations of the last week.* I suppose you read of the affair in the *Moniteur*. I have never in my life seen people so wild, so senseless as magistrates. For my consolation, I say to myself that twenty years from now, when some antiquarian shall poke his nose into the *Moniteur* of this week, he will say that he has discovered in 1861, in an assembly of *young* fools, a philosopher full of moderation and calmness. This philosopher is myself, and I say it without vanity.

In this country, where magistrates are recruited from the ranks of men too stupid to earn their living as lawyers, they are ill-paid, and to get on with them they are privileged to be insolent and quarrelsome. Happily, it is all ended at last. I have done what I ought to do, and if it were possible, I should reopen the case for the petition of Madame Libri.

I was cordially received here, and have not been laughed at on account of my defeat. I expressed my opinion of the affair very plainly, and have had no intimation of any disapproval of my judgment. After all the excitement of these last days, I feel as if an enormous weight had rolled off my back. The weather is superb, and the air of the woods delicious. There are

* The Libri matter, and the sessions of the Senate.

few people here. My hosts are, as usual, extremely kind and friendly.

We have with us the Princess Metternich, who is very vivacious, after the German fashion —that is to say, she has created for herself a kind of originality composed of two parts of rapid woman and one of great lady. I fancy she has not wit enough to sustain the rôle she has adopted. To-day we are going hunting. The evenings are a little tedious, but they do not last forever. I expect to be here a week longer; my official duties hold me here, however, only until Sunday. If I remain beyond that time I shall let you know.

Good-bye, dear friend. Some one has come for me.

CCXXXIX

CHÂTEAU DE FONTAINEBLEAU,

Monday, June 24, 1861.

DEAR FRIEND: I have not budged from here, and shall remain until the end of the month, thanks, no doubt, to Cæsar. I told you that I had a sunstroke, and for twenty-four hours was in a very dangerous condition. I have entirely recovered now, but am suffering from lumbago, which I caught rowing on the lake. . . .

I am waiting impatiently for news from you,

but fear that I am somewhat to blame. I promised to write to you if I left Fontainebleau, but what can I do? One does nothing here, and yet one is never free. Sometimes we are called on to walk in the woods, sometimes to make a translation. Most of the time is spent in waiting. The great accomplishment of the country is to know how to wait—a part of my education which I find it difficult to acquire.

At this moment our chief expectation is centred in the Siamese ambassadors, who will arrive Thursday. Some say that they will present themselves on all-fours, after the custom of their country, crawling on their knees and elbows; others add that they will lick the floor, sprinkled with candy in view of this performance. Our ladies imagine that they are to receive wonderful gifts. I believe they will bring nothing at all, and that they will expect to carry away many beautiful things.

I went last Wednesday to Alise with the emperor, who has become an accomplished archæologist. He spent three and a half hours on the mountain, under the most terrific sun in the world, examining the remains of the siege of Cæsar, and reading the *Commentaries*. We lost all the skin from our ears, and came back looking like chimney-sweeps. We spend our even-

ings upon the lake, or under the trees, looking at the moon and wishing for rain. I suppose you have the same weather at N——. Good-bye, dear friend. Take care of yourself; do not expose yourself to the sun, and let me hear from you.

CCXL

CHÂTEAU DE FONTAINEBLEAU, *June 29, 1861.*

DEAR FRIEND: I received the cigar-case, which is charming even to my eyes, which have just seen the gifts of the Siamese ambassadors. Our letters crossed. I am so busy here doing nothing that I have had no time to write. At last we are all leaving to-night, and I shall be in Paris when you receive this letter.

We had, on Tuesday, a passably good ceremony, quite like that in the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme.* It is impossible to conceive of a more singular spectacle than that of a score of black men, with a strong resemblance to monkeys, dressed in gold brocade, and wearing white stockings and patent-leather shoes, with sword at their sides, all flat on their stomachs, crawling on knees and elbows along the Henri II gallery, carrying their noses as high as the backs of those who preceded. If you have ever seen the adver-

tisement on the *Pont Neuf,* " The Dog's Good-morning," you may form some idea of the scene.

The first ambassador had the hardest time. He wore a felt hat embroidered in gold, which danced on his head at every movement, and, besides, carried in his hands a bowl of gold filigree, containing two boxes, in each of which was a letter from their Siamese majesties. The letters were in silk and gold purses, and the whole thing extremely rich.

After having delivered the letters, when they tried to turn around, confusion reigned in the embassy. There were kicks from behind into faces, swords thrust into the eyes of those on the second row, who in turn were putting out the eyes of the third row. The spectacle resembled a troop of cockchafers on a carpet.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs had invented this charming ceremony, and had required the ambassadors to crawl. The Asiatics are supposed to be more guileless than they are, and I am confident that they would have found no fault had they been permitted to walk. The whole effect of the crawling was lost, however, because the emperor became impatient at last, rose, made the cockchafers rise, and conversed in English with one of them. The empress kissed a little monkey which they had brought

with them, and which is said to be the son of one of the ambassadors; he ran on all-fours like a little rat, and had an intelligent expression.

The temporal king of Siam sent his portrait to the emperor, and that of his wife, who is hideously ugly. But you would have delighted in the variety and beauty of the stuffs which they brought. They are of gold and silver, woven so delicately that they are perfectly transparent, and resemble the light clouds of a beautiful sunset. They presented the emperor with trousers, the legs of which are embroidered with small designs in enamel, gold, and green; and a waistcoat of gold brocade as soft as a silk handkerchief, the patterns of which, gold worked on gold, are marvellous. The buttons are of gold filigree, with small diamonds and emeralds. They have a red gold and a white gold, which when used together produce an admirable effect.

In short, I have never seen anything more stylish, and at the same time more elegant. What strikes one as singular in the taste of these savages is that, while they use only dazzling silks, gold and silver thread, there is nothing conspicuous in their stuffs. The materials are combined in marvellous taste, producing a quiet, harmonious effect.

Good-bye, dear friend. I expect to make a visit to London, where I have business connected with the Exposition. This will be about July 8th or 10th.

CCXLI

LONDON, *British Museum, July 16, 1861.*

I see by your last letter, dear friend, that you are as busy as a commander-in-chief on the eve of a battle. I have read in *Tristram Shandy* that in a house where a woman is in child-birth, all the women assume the privilege of ill-treating the men; this is the reason I have not written to you sooner. I was afraid you would treat me in a manner befitting your lofty grandeur. I hope, however, that your sister is safely delivered, and that you are relieved of all anxiety. Still, I should be glad to have your official opinion, but this does not mean that you are to send me a bulletin of printed information.

People here are talking of nothing but the affair of M. de Vidil. I have known him slightly in London and in France, and considered him a great bore. Here, where they are just as gullible as in Paris, there has been a furious outburst of resentment against him. He is known to have killed his wife, and probably many other persons. Now that he has been

acquitted, sentiment has changed completely, and if he has a good lawyer he will clear himself, and we shall weave crowns for him.

You may or may not know that there is a new chancellor, lord B——, who is old, but whose morals are not. A lawyer named Stevens sends his clerk with a card to the chancellor. The clerk inquires for him; he is informed that my lord has no house in London, but that he comes often from the country to a house in Oxford Terrace, where he has a lodging. The clerk goes to the house, and asks for my lord. "He is not here." "Do you think he will return for dinner?" "No, but to sleep, certainly; he comes here every Monday night to sleep." The clerk leaves the letter, and Mr. Stevens is now greatly astonished because the chancellor glowers at him. The truth of the matter is, that my lord has there a clandestine establishment.

I have been in London since Thursday, and have not yet had a moment of rest. I am running about from morning until night. Every day I am invited out to dinner, and in the evening there are concerts and balls. I went to a concert yesterday at the marquis of Lansdowne's. There was not a pretty woman present, which is unusual here, but, on the other hand, they were dressed, all of them, as if the chief dispenser of styles at

Brioude had made their gowns. I never saw anything to equal their head-dress. One old woman had a crown of diamonds composed of small stars, with a huge sun in front, precisely like the wax figures at a fair! I think of remaining here until early in August. Good-bye, dear friend. . . .

CCXLII

LONDON, *British Museum, July 25, 1861.*

. . . I pass my time here monotonously enough, although I dine out every day at a different house, and see people and things I have not seen before. I dined yesterday at Greenwich with some great personages, who tried to make themselves lively, not, like the Germans, by throwing themselves out of the window, but by making a vast amount of noise. The dinner was abominably long, but the whitebait was excellent.

We have unpacked here twenty-two cases of antiquities from Cyrenaica. There are two statues and several busts which are truly remarkable, belonging to a good period and thoroughly Greek; one Bacchus especially, although a little delicate, is fascinating. The head is in an extraordinary state of preservation.

M. de Vidil is properly and duly committed, and will be tried at the next assizes. He will not be allowed to give bail. It seems, however, that the worst that may happen to him is to be sentenced to two years' imprisonment, for the English law recognises murder only in the event of the victim's death; and, as Lord Lyndhurst said to me, a man must be a great bungler in England to allow himself to be hanged.

I went, the other evening, to the House of Commons and heard the debate on Sardinia. It is impossible to be more verbose, more flat, and more insignificant that most of the orators, notably lord John Russell, now simply lord Russell. Mr. Gladstone pleased me. I hope to return to Paris the 8th or 10th of August, and to find you quietly resting in some sort of solitude. I think my health is better than in Paris; nevertheless, the weather is atrocious.

I was interrupted in my letter to visit the Bank of England. I held in my hand four small packages which contained four million pounds sterling, but I was not permitted to carry them away. That would have occasioned the writing of two volumes. I was shown a pretty machine, which counts and weighs daily three million sovereigns. The machine hesitates an instant, and after a brief deliberation throws

the genuine sovereigns to the right and the counterfeit to the left. There is one that looks like a little ape. A bank-bill is presented to him, he bends his head and kisses it twice, leaving on the bill certain marks which the counterfeiters have not yet succeeded in imitating.

Finally, I was taken into the vaults, where I fancied myself in one of those grottoes described in the *Thousand and One Nights.* They were lined with bags of gold and bullion, which sparkled in the gas-light. Good-bye, dear friend. . . .

CCXLIII

PARIS, *August 24, 1861.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have arrived at last, in not too good a state of preservation. I do not know whether it is from eating too heartily of turtle-soup, or from running about too much in the sun, but I have had a return of those pains in the stomach, which for some time had left me in peace. I am taken in the morning about five o'clock, and they continue an hour and a half. I suppose one suffers in somewhat the same way when one is hanged. This does not inspire in me any desire to be suspended!

I found awaiting my return more work than I like. Our imperial commission for the Uni-

versal Exposition is in travail; we are exhausting all our eloquence in persuading those who have pictures to lend them to us to send to London. Besides the obvious indiscretion of the proposition, it happens that most owners of private collections are Carlists or Orleanists, who think they are doing a pious act in refusing us. I fear we shall cut a poor figure in London next year, and all the more since we shall exhibit only works done during the last ten years, while the English will exhibit the products of their school since 1762.

How did you find the heat of the tropics? It is a consolation to read, in the papers which I receive, that in Madrid it was forty-four degrees, which is the temperature of the hot season in Senegal. There is no one in Paris, which suits me perfectly. I spent six weeks dining out, and it is a relief now not to be obliged to put on a white cravat for dinner. I visited the duke of Suffolk for a week, however, in a charming castle in almost absolute solitude. The country is level, but is covered with immense trees; and there is an abundance of water, so that the sailing is excellent. The place is quite near some fens, and is the region from which Cromwell sprang. There is an enormous quantity of game, and one can not take a step without running the risk of treading on pheasants or partridges.

I have no plans for the autumn, except that, if Madame de Montijo should go to Biarritz, I shall visit her there and spend a few days. She is still in sorrow, and I find her more desolate than she was last year at the time of her daughter's death.

It seems to me you have acquired a great fondness for that host of children. I can not understand this. I suppose you allow yourself to assume all the care of them, according to your habit of submitting to oppression, so long as it does not come from me. Good-bye, dear friend. . . .

CCXLIV

PARIS, *August 31, 1861.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have received your letter, which seems to indicate that you are happier than you have been in a long time. I am rejoiced at it. There is in me little disposition to be fond of children; still, I can understand how one should be attached to a little girl as to a young cat, an animal with which your sex has many points of resemblance.

I am still ill and suffering, and am awakened every morning in a state of suffocation, which soon passes. The solitude here is still com-

plete. I happened in at the Imperial Club yesterday and found there but three persons, and they were asleep. The weather is insupportably warm and sultry; as a change, they write me from Scotland that for forty days it has rained in torrents, in consequence of which the potatoes are ruined and the grain killed.

I am taking advantage of my solitude to work on something which I promised my master, and which I should like to take to him at Biarritz, but I am making slow progress. I have the greatest difficulty in doing anything at all, as the least excitement causes me intense suffering. I hope, however, to finish before the end of next week. . . .

I have for you a copy of *Stenka Razine*. Remind me to give it to you when I see you, and also to show you the portrait of a gorilla which I drew in London, and with whom I was on terms of intimacy; 'tis true, he was stuffed.

I am reading little but Roman history; nevertheless, I have read with great pleasure the nineteenth volume of M. Thiers. It seems to me to be more carelessly written than the preceding volumes, but it is full of curious things. In spite of his desire to say ill of his hero, he is continually carried away by his involuntary affection for him. He tells me that he will finish the

twentieth volume in December, and that he will then make a trip around the world, or else go to Italy.

There are stories of Montrond which interested me immensely; only I regretted that he could not have heard them told while he was in this world. It seems to me that M. Thiers describes him fairly enough, as an adventurer in love with his trade, and honest in his dealings with his principals so long as he was in their employ—quite like Dalgetty in the *Legend of Montrose.*

Judging by what I can see, our artists accept kindly the little rule which we have outlined for the Exposition in London; but when they shall see the position given them, I am not sure but they will throw baked apples at us. I have succeeded in extracting from M. Duchâtel the promise to lend us *The Spring* of M. Ingres. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCXLV

BIARRITZ, *September 20, 1861.*

DEAR FRIEND: I am still here, like the bird on the branch. It is not the custom to form plans in advance; on the contrary, never until the last moment does one make a resolution. Nothing has been said as to the time of our de-

parture, yet the days are growing shorter. The most tedious time of the day is the evening; it is cold after dinner, and with the arrangement of doors and windows invented here it is impossible to keep warm. All this makes me think that we shall not stay here much longer.

I am thinking of making a visit to M. Fould, at Tarbes, so that I may profit by these last beautiful days; after that I shall return to Paris, where I shall hope to find you settled. The sea air is doing me good. My breathing is better, but I sleep badly. 'Tis true, I am immediately on the sea-shore, where the slightest wind makes a terrible uproar.

As in all imperial residences, the time is spent here in doing nothing, while waiting for something to happen. I work a little; I sketch from my window, and walk a great deal. There are few people stopping at the Eugénie Villa, and they are people whom I like well enough. While the days here have twenty-four hours, as they have in Paris, I find that the time passes without much difficulty. . . .

We took a charming walk yesterday along the Pyrenees, near enough to see the mountains in all their glory, yet not near enough to suffer from the incessant inconvenience of climbing and descending them. We lost our way, and

met no one who understood our beautiful French language. This always happens as soon as one passes beyond the outskirts of Bayonne.

The Prince Imperial yesterday gave a dinner to a flock of children. The emperor himself made champagne for them out of seltzer-water, which had the same effect as if they had drunk real wine. In a quarter of an hour they were all tipsy, and my ears still ache from the racket they made.

Good-bye, dear friend. I have had the temerity to promise to translate for his Majesty a Spanish memoir on the site of Munda, and I have just made the discovery that it is terribly difficult to translate.

You may write here until the 23d or 24th. Send your letters after that to M. Fould, at Tarbes. Good-bye.

CCXLVI

PARIS, *November 2, 1861.*

My eyes are so bad that I did not recognise you at once the other day. Why do you come into my quarters without forewarning me? The person who was with me asked who the lady was with such beautiful eyes.

I spend all my time working like a negro

slave for my master, whom I shall go to see in a week. The prospect of eight days in knee-breeches is somewhat terrifying. I should prefer to spend them out in the sunshine, and I begin to long for that time. On the other hand, the session with which we are threatened is maddening to me. I can not understand why Government business is not transacted in summer. . . .

I have for you a book which is not altogether stupid. My memory is failing, and I have had a volume bound, when I already had a copy. You see what you will gain by it.

I have recovered almost entirely from my stiff neck, but for several nights I have been up so late that I am extremely nervous and exhausted. When we meet we will converse on metaphysics. 'Tis a subject for which I cherish a great fondness because it is inexhaustible. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCXLVII

COMPIÉGNE, *November 17, 1861.*

DEAR FRIEND: We are to remain here until the 24th. It is the fault of his Majesty, the king of Portugal, that the fêtes, for which we have been making ready, were not given. They were

postponed, and we have been kept here in consequence. We are comfortable enough, inasmuch as we are all well acquainted, and as independent of one another as it is possible to be in such a place.

For lions we have four Highlanders in kilts, the duke of Athol, lord James Murray, and the son and nephew of the duke. It is most amusing to see these eight bare-knees in a salon where all the rest of the men are in knee-breeches or tight trousers. Yesterday, his grace's piper was brought in, and all four danced in such a way as to cause general alarm when they turned around. But there are ladies whose crinoline is still more alarming when they enter a carriage. As ladies invited as guests are not permitted to wear mourning, one sees legs of all colours. Red stockings I think very stylish.

Notwithstanding walks in damp, icy woods, and drawing-rooms heated red-hot, to the present time I have not caught cold; but I suffer from suffocation, and do not sleep. I was present at the great ministerial comedy, where one or two victims more were expected. The faces were interesting to observe, the addresses still more so; so that M. Walewski, the Excellency on trial, directed his grievances without any discrimination

against friends and foes alike. There is nothing like an intense preoccupation to make people say stupid things, especially when they are accustomed to saying them. Oh, the dulness of mankind!

The woman, on the contrary, was perfectly calm and self-possessed, and the lawyers' speeches and other proceedings excellent. The battle, it seems to me, is only postponed, and at the slightest provocation is inevitable.

What is said of the emperor's letter? I approve of it thoroughly. He has a way of his own of saying things, and when he speaks as a sovereign, he has the art of showing that he is not made of the same common dough as others. I think this is exactly what is needed by this noble nation, which does not like the commonplace.

Yesterday the princess of ——, who was drinking tea, ordered the footman to bring her *ti sel bour le bain.** After half an hour the footman returned, with twelve kilogrammes of coarse salt, supposing that she wished to take a salt bath.

Some one presented to the empress a picture by Müller representing queen Marie Antoinette in prison. The Prince Imperial inquired who this lady was, and why she was not in a palace. It was explained to him that she was a queen of

* *Le sel pour le pain :* Salt for the bread.

France, and what a prison was. Then he ran to the emperor and asked him please to pardon the queen whom he was keeping in prison.

He is a strange, sometimes a terrible, child. He says that he bows to the people always, because they deposed Louis Philippe, whom he did not like. He is a charming child. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCXLVIII

CANNES, *January 6, 1862.*
(I no longer remember dates.)

DEAR FRIEND: I shall not tell you of the sunshine of Cannes, for fear of causing you too great distress amidst the snows in which you must be at this moment. What is written to me from Paris makes me cold just to read. I suppose you must be still at R——, or on the journey therefrom; so that I shall take my chances in addressing this to your official residence, as the surest place for you to be found.

I have here, as companion and neighbour, M. Cousin, who came to be cured of laryngitis, and who talks like a one-eyed magpie, eats like an ogre, and is astonished not to recover under this beautiful sky, which he now sees for the first time. He is, moreover, very

interesting, for he possesses the gift of being witty to everybody. When alone with his servant, I fancy that he talks to him as he would to the most coquettish Orleanist or Legitimist duchess. The native Cannais are fascinated by him, and you may imagine how they will stare when they are informed that this man, who talks well on any subject, has translated Plato, and is the lover of Madame de Longueville. The only inconvenience is that he does not know when to stop talking. For a philosopher of the Eclectic school, it is a pity not to have adopted the good features of the Peripatetics.

I am not doing much of anything here. I am studying botany in a book and with the plants which fall under my hand, but every instant I bewail my bad sight. It is a study which I should have begun twenty years ago, when I had my eyes. It is, however, very amusing, although supremely immoral, since for one lady there are always at least six or eight gentlemen, all eager to offer her what she accepts with much indifference from the right and the left. I regret exceedingly not to have brought my microscope; still, with my spectacles I have seen stamens making love to a pistil without showing any embarrassment at my presence.

I am sketching also, and am reading in a

Russian book the history of another Cossack, a much better soldier than Stenka Razine, named, unfortunately, Bogdan Chmielnicki. With a name so difficult to pronounce, it is not astonishing that he has remained unknown to us Occidentals, who remember only names of Latin or Greek derivation.

How has the winter treated you? and how do you manage the little children who absorb so much of your time? Apparently you find the bringing up of children an amusing occupation. I have had experience only in raising cats, who have given me scant satisfaction, excepting the last one who had the honour to know you. The intolerable thing about children, it seems to me, is that you must wait so long to know what they have in their brains, and to hear them reason. It is a great pity that the trouble taken in cultivating the youngsters' intelligence can not be undertaken by the chits themselves, and that new ideas come to them almost unconsciously. The principal question is, to know whether they should be taught silly things, as we were, or whether we should talk to them reasonably. There is something to be said for and against both systems.

Some day, when you pass Stassin's, kindly look in his catalogue for a book by Max Müller,

a professor in Oxford, on linguistics; unfortunately I do not recollect the title of the book. You must tell me if it costs very much, and if I shall be obliged to forego my fancy to possess it. I am told it is an admirable analysis of language.

I have made the acquaintance of a poor cat who lives in a hut back in the woods. I take him bread and meat, and as soon as he spies me coming he runs a quarter of a mile to meet me. I regret that I can not take him away with me, for he has marvellous powers of instinct.

Good-bye, dear friend. I hope this letter will find you in as good health and as flourishing condition as last year. I wish you a prosperous and happy New Year. . . .

CCXLIX

CANNES, *March 1, 1862.*

. . . You are very good to think of my book in the midst of all your cares. If you can have it for me by the time I return I shall esteem it a great favour, but do not give yourself much trouble about it.

My cousin's fête-day went completely out of my head, and I recalled it the other day only when it was too late. When I return we will

talk the matter over, if you please. Every year it becomes more embarrassing, and I have exhausted the possibility of rings, pins, handkerchiefs, and buttons. It is deuced hard to invent something new!

As for novels, the difficulty is equally great. In this class of books I have just read a few rhapsodies that deserve nothing less than corporal punishment. I am going to spend three days in the mountains, at Saint Césaire, beyond Cannes, at the home of my doctor, who is a man of the kindest impulses. Upon my return I shall begin to think seriously of starting for Paris.

I do not regret in the least having been absent from all the hubbub that has gone on in the Luxembourg, and which was worthy of fourth-form schoolboys. Even less do I regret that I took no share in the elections or, rather, the preliminary elections, which were held at the Academy the other day.

We are at this time in subjection to the clericals, and soon, in order to be recognised as a candidate, it will be necessary to produce a certificate of confession. M. de Montalembert gave such a certificate of Catholicism to a friend of mine, who, to be sure, is from Marseilles, but who had the good sense to offer no objection. Up to the present these gentlemen are not trou-

blesome, but with time and success they are in danger of becoming so.

You can imagine nothing prettier than our country in fine weather. This is not the case to-day, however, for something extraordinary, it has been raining since morning. All the fields are covered with violets and anemones, and with quantities of other flowers whose names I do not know.

Good-bye, dear friend. Soon I shall see you, I hope. I wish to find you again in the same excellent condition in which I left you two months ago. Do not grow thin or stout, do not worry too much, and think of me now and then. Good-bye.

CCL

LONDON, *British Museum, May 12, 1862.*

. . . So far as the Exposition is concerned, frankly, it cannot compare to the first: to the present time it is much of a *fiasco.* It is true that all the goods are not yet unpacked, but the building is horrible. Although of vast size, it does not appear so. One must walk about and lose himself in it before he realises its extent. Every one says there are many beautiful things to be seen. As yet I have examined only Class 30, to which I belong and of which I am the reporter.

I find that the English have made great progress in taste and in the art of decoration. We make much better furniture and wall-paper than they, but we are in a deplorable position, and if it continues we shall soon be outdistanced. Our jury is presided over by a German who thinks he can speak English, and whom it is well-nigh impossible to understand.

Nothing is more absurd than our meetings; no one has an idea of the subject under discussion; nevertheless, we vote. The worst is, that in our department we have several English manufacturers, and we shall be compelled to give these gentlemen medals which they do not deserve.

I am besieged by invitations to addresses and receptions. I dined day before yesterday with Lord Granville. There were three small tables in a long gallery, which arrangement was intended to make the conversation general; but as the guests were scarcely acquainted with one another, there was very little talking.

At night I went to Lord Palmerston's, where were present the Japanese embassy, who got caught on all the women with the immense sabres which they wore at their belts. I saw some very beautiful women, and some very abominable ones; all of them made a complete exhibition of their shoulders and bosoms, some admirable,

others extremely hideous, but both shown with the same impudence. I think the English are no judges of such things. Good-bye, dear friend . . .

CCLI

LONDON, *British Museum, June 6, 1862.*

DEAR FRIEND: I begin to catch a glimpse of the end of my troubles. My report to the International Jury, written in the purest Anglo-Saxon, without a single word derived from the French, was read by me yesterday, and the matter is concluded in that quarter. There remains another report for me to make to my own Government. I think I shall be free in a few days, and I may be able, probably, to leave for Paris from the 15th to the 20th of this month. It will be well for you to write to me before the 15th, where you will be then and what your plans are.

I think, decidedly, that the Exhibition is a *fiasco*. In vain do the Commissioners advertise extensively and sound the trumpet; they cannot succeed in attracting a crowd. To pay expenses, they need fifty thousand visitors a day, and they are far from realising their expectations. Fashionable people do not attend since the admission has been reduced to a shilling, and common people do not seem to feel any interest in it. The

restaurant is detestable. The American restaurant is the only one that is interesting. There you may order drinks more or less diabolical, which are taken with straws: mint julep, or "corpse reviver." All these drinks are made of gin, more or less disguised.

I have invitations to dinner for every day until the 14th. After that I shall make a visit to Oxford, in order to see Mr. Max Müller, and to examine some old manuscripts in the Bodleian Library. I shall then leave. I am tired to death with British hospitality and with its dinners, all of which seem to have been prepared by the same inexperienced cook. You cannot imagine how eagerly I long to eat my own plain soup. By the way, I do not remember if I told you that my old cook was to leave me, to go to live on her property. She has been with me for thirty-five years. This is exasperating to the last degree, for nothing is so disagreeable to me as new faces.

I do not know which of two important events of the last few days has produced the greater effect: one, the defeat of two favourites at the Derby by an unknown horse; the other, the overthrow of the Tories in the House of Commons. These have overspread London with gloomy countenances, all extremely unpleasant to be-

hold. A young lady in a box swooned away on learning that Marquis was beaten a head's length by a rustic horse minus a pedigree. M. Disraeli puts on a better countenance, for he shows himself at all the balls. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCLII

PARIS, *July 17, 1862.*

I shall not try to express *all* the regrets I feel. I wish that you might have shared them. If you had had half as much as I, you would have found a means of making others wait for me.

Since your departure I have endured some painful experiences. My poor old Caroline died at my home, after great suffering; so now I am without a cook, and do not know exactly what I shall do. After her death her nieces came to dispute her estate. One of them, however, took her cat, which I intended to keep. She left, it seems, an income of twelve or fifteen hundred francs. It has been demonstrated to me that she could not have saved that amount from the wages which she earned with me, and yet I do not believe she ever robbed me. If she did, I would agree willingly to be robbed in that way always. I have had a strong desire to have a

cat like the late Matifas, who approved of you so heartily, but I am going soon on a journey to the Pyrenees, and I shall have no time to train him.

They tell me the waters of Bagnères-de-Bigorre will do me the most good. I have no faith in their curative powers, but the surrounding mountains are beautiful, and I have friends in the vicinity. M. Panizzi will come for me the 5th of August, and we shall return together by way of Nîmes, Avignon, and Lyons. I shall hope to reach Paris the same time that you do.

Madame de Montijo arrived last week: she is greatly changed, and distressing to see. Nothing consoles her for the death of her daughter, and she seems to me less resigned than when the shock came. I dined last Thursday at Saint Cloud, with a few intimate friends, and enjoyed it not a little. They are less popish, I fancy, than is generally supposed. They allowed me to be as critical as I pleased, without calling me to order. The little prince is charming. He has grown two inches, and is the prettiest child I have even seen.

To-morrow our work on the Campana Museum will be finished. The sympathisers of the purchasers are enraged, and hurl abuse at us in the papers. We should have a long story to tell

if we wished to bring to light all the absurdities they have committed and the rubbish which has been palmed off on them for genuine antiques.

It is horribly warm here, but I do not find it uncomfortable. They say it is good for the grain. Good-bye, dear friend . . .

CCLIII

BAGNÈRES-DE-BIGORRE, *Villa Laquens, Hautes-Pyrénées, Saturady, August 16, 1862.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have been here for three days with M. Panizzi, after a most fatiguing journey under a frightful sun. He left us (it is the sun of which I speak) day before yesterday, and we are now having weather worthy of London, with fog, and an imperceptible, drizzling rain, which soaks through to your very bones.

I have met here one of my friends, who is the resident physician. He has made a thorough examination of me, punched me in the back and chest, and discovered that I have two mortal diseases, of which he has undertaken to cure me, provided that I drink every day two glasses of warm water, the taste of which is not bad, and which does not give me palpitation of the heart, as ordinary water does. I am to bathe, more-

over, in a certain spring of which the water is hot, but which is very agreeable to the skin. It seems to me that the treatment is doing me much good. I have rather disagreeable palpitation in the morning, and I sleep badly, but have a good appetite. According to your manner of reasoning, you will conclude that I am going to have a marvellous cure.

There are few people here, and almost no one of my acquaintance, which pleases me to excess. The crops of Englishmen and prunes have been this year a complete failure.

As for beauties, we have Mademoiselle A. D——, who made at one time a tremendous impression on Prince ——, and on the swells. I do not know what disease she has, I have seen only her back, and she has the most immense crinoline in all the place.

There are two balls given every week, to which I have no intention of going, and amateur concerts, of which I have heard and shall hear but one. Yesterday, I had to undergo high mass, which I attended accompanied by a body-guard; but I declined the invitation of the under-prefect at night, so as not to suffer too great an accumulation of catastrophes in one day.

The country is very lovely, but I have as yet had only a glimpse of it. I shall paint as soon

as there is a ray of sunshine. What has become of you? Write to me. I should love to show you the incomparable verdure of this country, and especially the beauty of the waters, with which crystal would not be a worthy comparison. It would be pleasant to talk with you in the shade of the great beech-trees. Are you still under the charm of the sea and the sea-monsters? Good-bye, dear friend.

CCLIV

BAGNÉRES-DE-BIGORRE, *September 1, 1862.*

DEAR FRIEND: I thank you for your letter. I shall send this to N——, since you do not intend to stop in Paris, and I fancy that you have already arrived there.

Speaking of the quarrels of the fisher folk, you have experienced that which happens inevitably to a resident of Paris. The little disputes and the little interests of the provinces seem so petty and so pitiable, that one deplores the condition of people who live there. It is certain, however, that after a few months in the country one does as the natives do: one becomes interested in local affairs, and finally completely provincial. This is sad for human intelligence, but it accepts the nourishment offered, and makes the best of it.

Last week I made an excursion into the mountains to visit a farm belonging to M. Fould. Situated on the border of a small lake, before it lies the most superb panorama imaginable, and immediately surrounding it is a forest of noble trees, something rarely seen in France. One can live there in admirable comfort. M. Fould owns a great many superb horses and cattle, all cared for in the English fashion. I was shown, besides, a jack used for the breeding of mules. He is an enormous beast, as tall as a gigantic stallion, black, and wicked-looking, as if he were enraged. It seems that it is with the greatest difficulty that he can be prevailed upon to show any attention to the mares. A jenny is brought near him, and when his imagination has become fired, the mare is then produced. What do you think of human ingenuity, which has invented all these fine industries? You will be furious with my stories, and I can see your expression from here.

Society becomes every day more stupid. In this connection, have you read *Les Misérables,* and heard what is said of it? This is another instance in which I find the human race inferior to that of the gorilla.

The waters are doing me good. I sleep better and have some appetite, although I do not

take much exercise, because my companion is not very active. I expect to remain here almost a week still; I may then go to Biarritz, or else into Provence. We have abandoned the plan of making a visit to Lake Majeur, since the house where we were going cannot entertain us at this time. I shall be in Paris, at the very latest, by October 1st.

Good-bye, dear friend; good-bye, and write to me.

CCLV

BIARRITZ, *Villa Eugénie,*
September 27, 1862.

DEAR FRIEND: I am writing to you still at ——, although I know nothing at all of your movements, but it seems to me that you were not to return so soon to Paris. If, as I hope, you have such weather as ours, you should take advantage of it, and not be in too great a hurry to return to the odours of the asphalt streets of Paris.

I am here beside the sea, and breathing more freely than I have in a long while. The waters of Bagnères were beginning to make me very ill. I was told that this was all the better, as it proved them to be taking effect. The fact is that as soon as I had left Bagnères I felt made over.

The sea air, and perhaps also the royal food which I eat here, have finished my cure. It must be admitted that the cooking in the Hotel de —— at Bagnères is the most abominable I have ever seen, and I believe verily that Panizzi and I were undergoing slow poisoning.

There are few people at the villa, and those only agreeable people whom I have known for a long time. In the city there is no crowd, very few French especially; the Spanish and the Americans predominate. On Thursday, when we receive, it is necessary to put the Americans from the North on one side and the Americans from the South on the other, for fear that they will devour each other.

On this day we dress. The rest of the time we make no attempt at a toilette; the ladies come to dinner in high-necked gowns, and we of the ugly sex in frock-coats. There is not a château in France or England where there is such freedom and absence of etiquette, nor a hostess so gracious and so kind to her guests.

We take charming walks in the valleys that skirt the Pyrenees, and return from them with prodigious appetites. The sea, which ordinarily is extremely rough here, has been for a week surprisingly calm; but it is nothing compared to the Mediterranean, and especially to the sea at

Cannes. The bathers appear in the strangest of costumes. There is a Madame ——, who is the colour of a turnip, and she dresses in blue and powders her hair. It is pretended that she puts ashes on her head because of the misfortunes of her country.

In spite of the walks and the food, I manage to work a little. I have written, while at Biarritz and in the Pyrenees, more than half a volume. It is the history of a Cossack hero, which is destined for the *Journal des Savants.* Speaking of literature, have you read Victor Hugo's speech at a dinner of Belgian booksellers and other swindlers in Brussels? What a pity that this fellow, who has at his command such beautiful fancies, has not the shadow of good judgment, nor the decency to restrain himself from uttering platitudes unworthy of an honest man! In his comparison of a tunnel with a railway, there is more poetry than I have seen in any book I have read in five or six years; but, for all that, it is all merely fancy. There is no depth, no solidity, no common-sense; he is a man who becomes intoxicated with his own words, and who no longer takes the trouble to think.

The twentieth volume of Thiers pleases me, as it does you. There was, to my mind, a tremendous difficulty to be met in extracting any-

thing tangible from the immense medley of conversations of Sainte Helena reported by Las Casas, and in this Thiers has succeeded marvellously. I like, also, his views of Napoleon and and his comparison of him with other great men. He is a little severe on Alexander and on Caesar; yet there is much truth in what he says of the absence of virtue on the part of Caesar. Here, everybody is intensely interested in the book, and I fear there is far too much affection for the hero; for instance, they are unwilling to admit the truth of the anecdote of Nicomedes; nor you either, I fancy.

Good-bye, dear friend. Take good care of yourself, and do not sacrifice yourself too much for others, because it will become a habit with you, and that which you do to-day with pleasure you may be obliged some day to do with pain. Good-bye again.

CCLVI

PARIS, *October 23, 1862.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have had an exciting time since the beginning of the month; this is the reason for my delay in answering your letter. I returned from Biarritz with the sovereigns. We were all in a doleful state, having been poisoned,

I think, with verdigris. The cooks swear that they scoured their utensils, but I do not believe in their protestations. The fact is that fourteen persons at the villa were seized with vomiting and cramps. I have been poisoned before with verdigris, so that I know the symptoms of it, and persist in my opinion.

I remained in Paris a few days, running about and attending to business matters, and then went to Marseilles, to the christening of the China steam-packets. You understand that this ceremony required my presence. These boats are so beautiful, and have such comfortable little state-rooms, that they give you the desire to go to China. I resisted, however, and contented myself by taking a sun-bath at Marseilles.

You have divined, perhaps, the meaning of my reference to the turmoil in which I was engaged on my return from Biarritz—political affairs, if you please. I was divided between my wish to see M. Fould remain in the ministry, in the interest of the Master, and my wish to see him resign, in the interest of his dignity, and in his own interest. The result has been concessions which have benefited no one, and which seem to me to have been degrading to everybody concerned.

The most absurd part of the business has

been that Persigny, whom none of the ministers, with the exception of the papists, can endure, has become their standard-bearer, and his retention has been made a condition of holding their portfolios. Thus, Thouvenel, an excellent and intelligent fellow, has been dismissed, and Persigny, who is a fool and who has no understanding of affairs, retained. Now we are in the clutches of the clericals for no one knows how long, and you know how they treat their friends.

You seem to me to be too much affected by Victor Hugo's speech. It is words without ideas; somewhat in prose like *Les Orientales*. To attune yourself to good prose, I commend you to read one of Madame de Sévigné's letters, and, if you still have a taste for common-sense and ideas, read the twentieth volume of Thiers, which is the best of all. I have read it twice, the second time with more pleasure than the first, and I do not say that I shall not read it once more.

I should like to know something of your plans. I will tell you my own. I expect to go to Compiègne towards the 8th of next month, and remain there until after the Empress's fête—that is, until the 18th or 20th. Before or after that time, may I not see you? It seems to me that the country must be very cold and damp at this

season, and that you should think of returning. . . .

Good-bye, dear friend. I hope you are still in good appetite and health.

CCLVII

PARIS, *November 5, 1862.*

DEAR FRIEND: I am invited to Compiègne until the 18th. I shall be in Paris the 10th, until three o'clock, and hope to see you. Write to me and tell me a great deal about yourself. I disapprove strongly of your new literary taste. I am now reading a book which might, however, interest you; it is the history of the revolt of the Netherlands, by Motley. I will send it to you, if you wish. There are no less than five thick volumes; and while not specially well written, it reads easily, and interests me no little. He has much anticatholic and antimonarchical partiality; but his researches have been extensive, and although an American, he is a man of talent.

I have taken cold, and have pain in my lungs. You will hear some day that I have ceased to breathe for lack of this organ. This should make you treat me with great kindness, before the arrival of such a misfortune. Good-bye, dear friend. . . .

CCLVIII

CANNES, *December 5, 1862.*

DEAR FRIEND: I arrived here between two deluges, and for four days I thought there was no longer any sun even at Cannes. When it once begins to rain in this land, it is no joke. The fields between Cannes and the Estérel were transformed into a lake, and it was impossible to stick one's head out of doors. Still, in the midst of this down-pour the air was mild and agreeable to breathe. Since I became asthmatic, I have been as sensitive in the matter of air as the Romans are respecting water.

That condition of affairs, fortunately, did not last long. The sun reappeared radiant three days ago, and since then, I have kept my windows open all the time, and am almost too warm. It is only the flies which remind me of the vexations of life.

Before leaving Paris, I consulted a celebrated doctor, for since my return from Compiègne I believed myself to be in a very serious state, and I wanted to know how soon I should have to arrange for my funeral. I am pleased enough with having consulted him, in the first

place, because he assured me that this ceremony would not take place as soon as I had feared; in the second place, because he explained to me, anatomically, and with perfect clearness, the cause of my illness. I supposed my heart was affected; not so at all; it is my lung. It is true that I shall never be cured, but there are means by which I may be spared suffering; which is a great deal, if not the principal consideration.

You can form no idea of the beauty of the country after all these rains. May roses are in bloom everywhere; jasmines are beginning to bloom, as also quantities of wild flowers, each more beautiful than the others. I should like to take a course in botany with you in the neighbouring woods; you would see whether they are not equal to those at Bellevue.

I have received, I know not from whom, the last book of M. Gustave Flaubert, the author of *Madame Bovary*, which you have read, I fancy, although you will not admit that you have. I suppose he had talent, which he was squandering under the pretext of realism. He has just perpetrated a new novel, called *Salammbô*. In any other place than Cannes, particularly, where there was nothing to read but *La Cuisinière Bourgeoise*, I should not have opened this volume. It is a story of Carthage several years be-

fore the Second Punic War. By reading Bouillet and some other works of the same class, the author has acquired a sort of false erudition, and he accompanies this with a lyricism imitated from the very worst of Victor Hugo's. There are passages which will please you, doubtless, since, like all persons of your sex, you like magniloquence. As for me, I detest it, and it has made me furious.

Since I have been here, and especially since the rain, I have continued my Cossack article. It will take long, I fear, to finish. I shall send soon to Paris a second instalment, and there will be more to follow. I discover that I forgot to bring with me a map of Poland, and I am embarrassed in writing Polish names, of which I have only the Russian translation. If you have within your reach some means of ascertaining it, will you endeavour to find out if a city which in Russian is called Lwow, is not perhaps the same as Lemberg in Galicia? You will be doing me a great service.

Good-bye, dear friend, I hope winter is not using you too severely, and that you are taking care to avoid colds. Is your little niece still amiable? Do not spoil her, so that she will store up future unhappiness for herself.

I wish you would go to see the comedy of

my friend M. Augier, and that you would give me your candid opinion of it. Good-bye once more.

CCLIX

CANNES, *January 3, 1863.*

DEAR FRIEND: I began the year badly enough, in my bed, with a very painful attack of lumbago, which did not allow me even the privilege of turning over. This is what you get in these beautiful climates, where, so long as the sun is above the horizon, you imagine that it is summer, but where immediately after sunset comes a quarter of an hour of damp chilliness that penetrates to the very marrow of your bones. It is precisely as in Rome, with the difference that here it is rheumatism, and there fever, against which one must guard. To-day my back has regained some of its elasticity, and I have begun to walk.

I have had a visit from my old friend M. Ellice, who spent twenty-four hours with me and renewed my stock of news, and my ideas, which had become strikingly shrivelled by my sojourn in Provence. Everything considered, this is the only inconvenience of living away from Paris. One soon comes to be a log when one does not share the tastes of my friend, M. de Laprade,

who would like to be an oak. This transformation has in it nothing agreeable.

If I continue to improve I think of returning to Paris on the 18th or 20th, to hear the discussion of the address, which they tell me will be warm and interesting. After having paid my respects, I shall come back to the sunshine; for if I had to endure the sleets and winds and mud of Paris in February, I should assuredly kick the bucket. . . .

You are wrong not to read *Salammbô*. It is perfectly mad, it is true, and it contains even more of anguish and more of abominations than the *Vie de Chmielnicki;* but, after all, it has talent, and one gains an amusing idea of the author, and one even more droll of his admirers, the bourgeois, who wish to discuss affairs with honest folk. It is these same bourgeois whom my friend, M. Augier, has ridiculed so well. I am assured that no one with any self-respect will confess that he has been to see *Le Fils de Giboyer*. For all that, the cash-box of the theatre, and the purse of the author are filled to overflowing.

I recommend you to read in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of the 15th, a novel by M. de Tourguenieff, the proofs of which I am expecting here, and which I have read in Russian. It

is called *Fathers and Sons*, and its theme is the contrast of the past generation with that of the present. The hero of the story is the representative of the rising generation, a socialist, materialist, and realist, but a man, nevertheless, who is intelligent and interesting. He is a singular character, and would please you, I hope. This novel has produced a tremendous sensation in Russia, and there has been a strong outcry against the author, who has been accused of impiety and immorality. When a work excites thus the furious invective of the public, it is, in my opinion, a sufficient proof of its success.

I think I shall have to make you read again the second part of *Chmielnicki*, the proofs of which I corrected while I was ill on my back. You will see in the book an enormous quantity of Cossacks impaled, and Jews burned alive.

I shall be in Paris, not to hear the address of the crown, but only the discussion of the address—that is, I suppose, about the 20th or the 21st; still, if it were more convenient for your personal plans, I might hasten my arrival.

Good-bye, dear friend. I wish you health and happiness, and no lumbago. Good-bye. Do not forget me.

CCLX

CANNES, *January 28, 1863.*

DEAR FRIEND: I was preparing to start for Paris, and expected to be there the 20th, when I was seized with another attack of my spasms of the stomach. I had a terrible cold, with most distressing choking, and kept my bed for a week. The physician told me that if I were to return to Paris before being entirely cured I should certainly have a relapse, which would be more serious than my present illness, so I shall remain where I am for another fortnight. I understand, besides, that the discussion of the address will be uninteresting, and that everything will pass quietly and quickly.

At present I am pretty well, a little weakly still, but I am beginning to go out again and to lead my usual life. The weather is admirable: this climate, however, is somewhat treacherous, and less than any one else I should allow myself to be deceived by it. So long as the sun is above the horizon one would suppose it was June; five minutes after sunset, however, arises a penetrating dampness. It is from admiring the beautiful sunsets too long that I have been ill.

They tell me that you have had no severe

cold, but fog and rain. Around about us an incredible amount of snow has fallen, and nothing is lovelier at this time than the sight of the mountains all white with snow, surrounding our little green oasis.

How have you spent your time? Have you escaped catching cold and what sort of a life are you leading? I devote my evenings to writing for the *Journal des Savants*. That beast of a *Chmielnicki* is not yet dead, and will cost me, I fear, two more articles still before I can write his funeral oration. I have already written two as long as the one you read, and as abundant in impalements, flayings, and other pleasantries of the kind. I am apprehensive lest it is too much like *Salammbô*. You must tell me your candid opinion, if you come across this rare *Journal des Savants*, which the ignorant persist in neglecting to read in spite of its worth.

We have had a tragedy in our neighbourhood. A pretty English girl was burned fatally at a ball. Her mother, in trying to rescue her, was burned also. Both died in three or four days. The husband, who was burned also, is still ill. This is the eighteenth woman of my acquaintance to whom this has happened. Why do you wear crinoline? You should set an example. It is only necessary to turn around before the

chimney-place, or to look at one's self in the mirror (there is one always above the fireplace), to be roasted alive. It is true that one dies but once, and that it is a great source of satisfaction to exhibit a monstrous bustle, as if any one could be deceived by a balloon full of air! Why do you not have a metallic curtain before your chimney-place?

It seems that they are becoming more religious in Paris. I receive sermons from people from whom I should have expected something quite different. I am told that M. de Persigny came out as an ultra-papist in the committee of the Address to the Senate. Well and good, I do not believe there has ever been a period in the history of the world when it was more stupid than it is in this age. All this will last while it may, but the end is a little terrifying. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCLXI

PARIS, *April 26, 1863.*

DEAR FRIEND: As I was not counting on your travelling tortoise fashion, I did not write to you at Genoa. I am addressing this letter to Florence, where I hope that you will stop for a time. Of all the cities of Italy that I know, it

has best retained its characteristics of the Middle Ages. Only be careful not to catch cold, if you stay on the Lung' Arno, as all respectable people do.

As for Rome, it has been so long since I was there that I am unable to advise you about it. I shall offer you suggestions only on the two following points: first, do not be out in the air at twilight, because you might easily catch the fever. A quarter of an hour before the Angelus you should go to Saint Peter's, and wait there until the peculiar dampness which arises just at that time should have passed. There is nothing, moreover, more beautiful as a place of reverie than this great church at the fall of day. In the dimness, when all is seen indistinctly, it is truly sublime. Think of me there.

My second suggestion is, if you should have a rainy day, employ it by visiting the Catacombs. While you are there, go into one of the small corridors opening on the subterranean streets, extinguish your candle, and remain alone there three or four minutes. You must tell me the sensations which you felt. It would be a pleasure to me to make the experiment with you, but then you would not feel, perhaps, the same emotions.

It has never happened to me to see in Rome

what I had intended to see, because one is attracted on every street-corner by something unexpected, and it is a great pleasure to yield one's self to that sensation. I advise you, also, not to devote too much time to visiting palaces, which are for the most part overestimated.

Pay special attention to the frescos, regarding them from an artistic standpoint, and to views of nature blended with art. I commend to you the view of Rome and of its surroundings seen from Saint Peter's in Montorio. You will see there, also, a very beautiful fresco of the Vatican. Be sure to see at the Capitol the Wolf of the Republic, which bears the trace of the lightning which struck it in the time of Cicero. It is not a thing of yesterday.

Make up your mind that you will not be able to see the hundredth part of what you wish to see, in the short time that you can devote to your journey, but you need have few regrets on that score. There will remain with you a memory of the whole, which is far better than a lot of petty memories of details.

I am feeling infinitely better, and regret your departure. I will say to you, however, and to your sister, that you have done well to take advantage of the opportunity to see Rome. There remains only the question of damages due me,

which I pray you to keep in mind; I hope you will sometimes think of this.

There is not a beautiful place which I have seen, where I have not regretted my inability to associate you with it in my memory.

Good-bye, dear friend. Let me hear from you often, a few lines only; enjoy yourself, and come back in good condition. When I know that you are in Rome I shall give you some commissions. Good-bye again.

CCLXII

PARIS, *May 20, 1863.*

DEAR FRIEND: I am writing to you with an abominable grippe. For two weeks I have coughed instead of sleeping, and I have frequent attacks of choking. The only remedy is to take laudanum, and this gives me headache and stomach-ache, which are as distressing as the cough and the choking. In short, I feel weak and *avvilito*, and I am going to the dogs, my health and myself.

I hope it is not the same with you. I believe I have cautioned you to guard against the dampness accompanying the sunset in the country where you are now. Take care never to get cold, even if you should be too warm. I envy you for

being in that beautiful land, where one feels a melancholy that is sweet and agreeable, which he recalls afterwards with an emotion of pleasure: but to make the comparison better, I wish you would go to Naples for a week. Of all transitions, it is the most abrupt and the most amusing that I know. It has, moreover, the advantage of comedy after tragedy; one falls asleep with his head full of comical thoughts.

I do not know whether the science of cooking has made any advancement in the states of the Holy Father. In my time it was the abomination of desolation, while in Naples one managed to subsist. It is possible that the political revolutions have laid equally low the cookery of both Rome and Naples, and that, epicure as you are, you will find them both bad.

We are thriving here on the experiences which have happened, or have been ascribed to Madame de ——. What is certain is that she is crazy enough to be bound. She beats her servants, she slaps and strikes people, and makes love to several fast fellows at the same time. She pushes her Anglomania to the point of drinking brandy and water—that is to say, a great deal more of the former than the latter.

The other evening she introduced her foppish lover to President Troplong, by saying, "Mon-

sieur le President, I present to you my darling." M. Troplong replied that he was happy to make the acquaintance of M. Darling. If what I hear of the reigning society women of this year is true, it is to be feared that the end of the world is at hand. I dare not tell you all that is done in Paris among the young representatives of the rising generation!

I hoped that you would relate some incidents of your journey, or at least that you would share your impressions with me. It is always a pleasure for me to know how things appear to you. Do not forget to look at the statue of Pompey, which is probably the one at the base of which Caesar was assassinated; and if you discover the shop of a man named Cades, who sells imitation antiques and pottery, buy me an intaglio of some beautiful stone. If you should go through Civita Vecchia, go to a curio merchant named Bucci, give him my regards, and thank him for the plaster cast of Beyle which he sent me. You can purchase from him for a song black Etruscan vases, engraved gems, and other things of the kind. You can decorate your mantel charmingly with those black vases.

Good-bye, dear friend. Keep well, and think sometimes of me.

CCLXIII

PARIS, *Friday, June 12, 1863.*

DEAR FRIEND: I learn with great pleasure of your return to France, and with even greater pleasure of your intention to be in Paris soon. It seems to me that the trouble you took to be coquettish in order to work that unfortunate Bucci was truly extraordinary. If I had given you a letter of introduction to him, according to my intention, you might have carried away his whole shop, without the necessity of resorting to the process of wheedling so habitual to you. Indeed, he is a fine man to have retained an affection for Beyle, whose only resource he was during his exile at Civita Vecchia. It would have been better to have induced him to speak of the pontifical government. If he had been as sincere as he was gallant, he would have given you more information on that subject than all the ambassadors in Rome. The long and the short of that information would be, to tell you what you already know, I hope. . . .

I leave the 21st for Fontainebleau, which will prevent me, it may be, from going to Germany, as I had planned, the end of this month. I shall be there until July 5th—that is to say, until the

end of the sojourn. I think you will have returned next week, and that I shall see you before my departure. I hope this will decide you to come a little earlier, if need be.

You do not refer to your health. I suppose that, in spite of the wretched papal cooking, you are returning in good condition. I have had influenza constantly, more or less, and have been wheezy as usual, in the bargain. The stay at Fontainebleau will certainly finish me up, according to all the indications. I will tell you why I did not endeavour to escape this honour.

I am thinking of taking a short trip to Germany this summer, in order to see the propylons of my friend, M. Klenze, in Munich, and also to take the waters which have been advised for me, but in which I have no great faith. As I am unaccustomed to being ill, I persevere tenaciously in trying to get well, and if I do not succeed, I do not wish it to be from any fault of mine.

You have not dared, probably, to read *Mademoiselle de la Quintinie*, while you were on holy ground. It is mediocre. The book has but one pretty scene. In novels I know of nothing new that is worthy of your wrath. *Chmielnicki* is in its fifth article, which I am now correcting, and it is not the final one. I will give you the proofs,

if you like, if you can read them not corrected.

Good-bye, dear friend. I should be glad if you would decide to hasten your return.

CCLXIV

PALACE OF FONTAINEBLEAU,
Thursday, July 2, 1863.

DEAR FRIEND: I should have liked to reply sooner to your letter, which gave me much pleasure; but here one has no time for anything, and the days pass with an astonishing rapidity without knowing how. The important and principal occupations are eating, drinking, and sleeping. I am successful in respect to the first two, but not as to the last. It is a very poor preparation for sleep to spend three or four hours in tight trousers, rowing on the lake, and catching a terrible cold. There are a number of people here, well selected, it seems to me, and much less official than usual; which contributes to the cordial relations between the guests. Now and then we take walks in the woods, after dining on the grass like the milliners of the rue Saint Denis.

Several immense chests were brought here day before yesterday from his Majesty Tu-Duc,

the Emperor of Cochin-China. They were opened in one of the court-yards. Within the large chest were smaller ones painted red and gold, and covered with roaches. The first which was opened contained two very yellow elephant tusks, and two rhinoceros horns, plus a package of mouldy cinnamon. From all this there arose inconceivable odours, something between rancid butter and spoiled fish. In the other chest were quantities of rolls of very narrow stuffs resembling gauze, in all sorts of hideous colours, all more or less soiled, and, moreover, mouldy. They had promised to send some gold medallions, but they did not come, and have remained, probably, in China. The inference is that this great Emperor of Cochin-China is a fraud.

We went yesterday to see the manœuvres of two regiments of cavalry, and were horribly roasted. All the ladies are sun-burned. To-day we are going to have a Spanish dinner in the forest, and I am charged with the *gaspacho*—that is, to make the ladies eat raw onions. The mere mention of this vegetable would cause them to faint. I have given orders that they are not to be warned, and after they have eaten the onions I reserve to myself the privilege of making a confession, in the manner of that of Atræus.

I am delighted that my Cossack * has not bored you to death. For my own part I am beginning to be very tired of him. It is absolutely necessary to bury him the first of next month, and I do not know how to bring it about. Although I brought my notes and books with me, I can not succeed in accomplishing any work here.

Good-bye, dear friend. I expect to be here until Monday, or Tuesday at the latest. At the same time, they pretend that on account of our extreme amiability, they wish to hold us here several days still. I hope to find you in Paris when I come. Again good-bye.

CCLXV

LONDON, *August 12, 1863.*

DEAR FRIEND: I thank you for your letter, which I was expecting impatiently. I thought I should find London empty, and, indeed, that was the first impression which I received. But after two days I perceived that the great ant-hill was still inhabited, and especially, alas! that they ate as much and as long as they did last year. Is not the slowness with which people dine in this

* *Bogdan Chmielnicki*, published in the volume entitled *The Cossacks of the Past.*

country inhuman? It even takes away my appetite. One is never less than two hours and a half at table, and if we add the half hour in which the men leave the women to speak ill of them, it is always eleven o'clock when we return to the drawing-room. It would be only half bad if we were eating all the time; but with the exception of roast mutton, I find nothing to my taste.

The great men seem to me to have aged a little since my last visit. Lord Palmerston has renounced his false teeth, which make an immense change in his appearance. He has retained his whiskers, and looks like a gorilla that is slightly tipsy. Lord Russell has a less good-humoured expression than formerly. The great beauties of the season have departed, but they were not praised as anything extraordinary. The toilets seem to me, as usual, very common and shabby; but nothing can resist the air of this country. My throat is an evidence of it. I am as hoarse as a wolf, and breathe very badly.

I fancy that you must be having cooler weather than we, and that the sea-baths will give you an appetite. I am beginning to be bored with London and the English, and shall be in Paris before the 25th. And you? I have read a rather amusing book, *The History of George*

III, by a Mr. Phillimore, who makes out this prince to be a rascal and a fool. It is very witty, and convincing enough. I paid twenty francs for the last work of Borrow, *The Wild Wales*. If you want to pay fifteen francs for it, I shall be charmed to turn it over to you. But you will not want it at any price. The fellow has altogether deteriorated. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCLXVI

PARIS, *August 30, 1863*.

I go to-morrow to Biarritz with Panizzi, who joined me here yesterday. We are invited by our gracious sovereign, who will entertain us at the sea-shore for I know not how long. I shall settle in Cannes during October, returning to Paris for the discussion of the address, and remaining here, probably, all the month of November. In spite of presidents and sea-monsters, I hope to see you at that time.

I have an extremely curious book, which I will lend you if you are good and kind to me. It is an account of a trial of the Seventeenth Century, related by an imbecile. A nun belonging to his Majesty's family was in love with a Milanese gentleman, and as there were other nuns to whom this was displeasing, they killed

her, aided by her lover. It is highly edifying, and, as an exponent of the morals of the time, very interesting.

Read *Une Saison à Paris*, by Madame de ——. She is a person abounding in candour, who felt a keen desire to make herself agreeable to his majesty, and said so to him at a ball in terms so categoric and so definite, that nobody in the world, except yourself, would have failed to understand her. He was so astounded that he found nothing to say in reply, and it was only after three days, so they say, that he repulsed her. I can imagine you making the sign of the cross and that horrified face with which I am so familiar.

Have you read Renan's *Life of Jesus?* Probably not. It is a small book, but full of import. 'Tis like a great blow of an axe on the edifice of Catholicism. The author is so terrified by his own audacity in denying the divinity of Christ, that he loses himself in hymns of praise and adoration, until he has no longer the philosophic understanding which enables him to decide on questions of doctrine. It is interesting, however, and if you have not already done so, you will read it with pleasure.

I have my packing to do, and so I must leave you. My address until the new order is estab-

lished will be Villa Eugénie, Biarritz (Basses-Pyrénées). Write to me quickly. Good-bye.

CCLXVII

CANNES, *October 19, 1863.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have been here a week, resting in the desert from the fatigues of the court. The weather is magnificent. I see in the paper that your Loire is overflowing its banks; from which I conclude that you are having frightful storms, and I pity you from the bottom of my heart.

I shall enjoy Provence but a fortnight longer, as I must return for the opening of the session. I am not sanguine over it. The death of M. Billault makes it an unpropitious beginning. For some time past I have talked assiduously, preached and persuaded M. Thiers to preach likewise, but I do not know what will be the result. It seems to me that we are drawing nearer and nearer our former parliamentary course, and that we are about to repeat once more the cycle of the same mistakes, and perhaps the same catastrophes. See, in addition, the strenuous efforts on the part of the clericals to make themselves detested, and to stretch the cord until it

snaps. All this is enough to make one pessimistic concerning the future.

You have heard that on our journey here we were derailed near Saint Chamas. I was not at all affected, not even by fear, for I did not realise the danger until it was past. The only persons injured were the mail-clerks, who were thrown in a heap among their tables and chests. They came out of it with severe bruises, but no broken limbs.

Have you read the charge of the Bishop of Tulle, who orders all the pious ones of his diocese to recite *Aves* in honour of M. Renan, or, rather, to prevent the devil from carrying off everybody, because of this same M. Renan's book?

Since you are reading the letters of Cicero, you must see that in his age people had more wit than in ours. I am overwhelmed with shame every time I think of our nineteenth century, which I find in every respect so inferior to its predecessors.

I believe I made you read the *Lettres de la Duchesse de Choiseul.* I wish some one to-day would try to publish those of our most beautiful society woman. I leave you to go fishing, or, rather, to see other people fish, for I have never succeeded in landing a fish. The best part of it is that on the sea-shore they make an excellent

soup for those who like oil and garlic. I suppose you are among this class.

Shall I find you in Paris early in November? I am expecting to be able to remain there all the month, except a few days, perhaps, at Compiègne, if my sovereign invites me there for his fête-day. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCLXVIII

CHÂTEAU DE COMPIÈGNE,
November 16, 1863. At night.

DEAR FRIEND: Since my arrival here I have led the exciting life of an impresario. I have been author, actor, and stage director. We have played, with success, a piece which is somewhat immoral, the theme of which I will tell you on my return. We have had beautiful fireworks, although a woman who wished to see them too closely was killed outright. We take long walks, and until the present I have succeeded in escaping from all these diversions without catching cold.

I shall be held here for another week. I shall remain in Paris, probably, until early in December, and shall then return to Cannes, which I left with nature abloom. It is impossible to im-

agine anything more beautiful than those fields of jasmines and tuberoses. I am not feeling very well, and the last few days especially I have been good for nothing and despondent.

You write to me so laconically, that you never reply to my questions. You have a way of acting in accordance with your caprices which perplexes me always; you jest, you make promises; when I read your letters I fancy I hear your voice speaking. I am disarmed, but in reality furious.

You tell me nothing about that charming child in whom you are so interested. Bring her up, I pray you, so that she will not become as silly as most of the women of our time. Never, I think, has anything like it been seen. You will tell me what they are in the provinces. If they are worse than in Paris, I can not imagine in what desert one may escape them.

We have stopping here Mademoiselle ——, who is a lovely slip of a girl five feet four inches in height, with all the gracefulness of a grisette, and a blending of easy manners with sincere timidity which is sometimes most amusing. Some one expressed apprehension that the second part of a charade would not equal the introduction (of which I was the author).

"That is all right," she said; "we will show

our legs in the ballet, and that will compensate them for everything else."

N. B.—Her legs are like two pipe-stems, and her feet not exactly aristocratic.

Good-bye, dear friend. . . .

CCLXIX

PARIS, *Friday, December 12, 1863.*

DEAR FRIEND: I was about to write to you when I received your letter. You complain of having a cold, but you do not know what it means to have one. At this moment, but one person in Paris has a cold, and that person is myself. I spend my time coughing and choking, and if it continues, you will soon have to deliver my funeral oration. I am longing anxiously for Cannes, for it is only under its sun that I shall get well. Before going, however, I must vote on that tedious and involved discourse which our president, so worthy of his name,* has composed for our edification.

Do you know Aristophanes? Last night, being troubled with insomnia, I took up a volume and read it through. It was highly amusing. I have made a translation of it, none too good a one, but it is subject to your orders.

* *Troplong*—Too long.—TRANSLATOR.

There are things which will be shocking to your prudery, but they will interest you, especially now that you have learned from Cicero something of the morals of the ancients. Goodbye. . . .

CCLXX

CANNES, *January 12, 1864.*

DEAR FRIEND: I was seriously ill on my arrival here. I brought from Paris an abominable cold, and it is only during the last two days that I have begun to feel like myself. I do not know what would have become of me if I had remained in Paris, for I see by the papers that you are having snow. The weather here is admirable, with seldom a cloud, and a temperature which is usually at least 14 degrees. Occasionally, the east wind brings us a touch of snow caught from the Alps, but we are in a favoured oasis. They tell us that all the surrounding country is under snow. At Marseilles, at Toulon, and even at Hyères, it is said the ground is covered. I imagine a citizen of Marseilles in the snow as something like a cat walking on ice with nut-shells on his paws. It is a long time, even at Cannes, since such a lovely, mild winter has been known.

I am charmed that Aristophanes had the honour of pleasing you. You ask me if the

Athenian ladies were present at the theatrical representations? There are men of learning who say Yes, and others who say No. If you had gone to see Karagueuz when you visited the Orient, you would have found, no doubt, many women there. In Eastern countries to-day, and formerly in antiquity, there is not and there never has been any of the false modesty which you have. One saw at every glance men in bathing costumes, and on every public square were statues of gods which gave ladies an exaggerated idea of the human form.

What is the name of that comedy in which Euripides is dressed as a woman? Do you understand the stage setting, and the part of the Scythian gendarme? What is more extraordinary than anything else is the unceremonious fashion in which Aristophanes speaks of the gods, even on their festival days, for it was at the Dionysia that the play of *The Frogs* was given, wherein Bacchus takes a singular rôle.

The same thing occurred during the early period of Christianity. Comedy was played in the churches. There was a Mass of the Fools and a Mass of the Ass, the text of which is still extant in a very curious manuscript. The wicked have spoiled everything by doubting. When faith was universal, all was permissible.

Besides the absurdities which Aristophanes throws, like lumps of salt, into his plays, there are choruses of the most exquisite poetry. My revered teacher, M. Boissonade, used to say that no other Greek writer had written better poetry. If you have not read it already, I recommend to you *The Clouds*. It is, to my mind, the best of his plays that have been preserved. In it there occurs a dialogue between the Just and the Unjust, which is in the most elevated style. I think there is some truth in the reproaches which he addresses to Socrates. Even after having heard him in *Plato*, one is tempted to forgive him the hemlock. A man who proves to every one, as Socrates did, that he is a fool, is a plague.

I have just read that the conspiracies are beginning again. I have no doubt that those Italian devils, and those no less Polish devils, would like to set the world on fire; and the world, unhappily, is so stupid that it will allow it to be done. I have had letters from Italy which cause me to fear that Garibaldi and his volunteers will in the spring undertake some movement against Venice. It needs but some calamity of that sort to finish us up entirely.

Good-bye, dear friend. I try to think as little as possible of the future. Keep well, and think of me now and then. Have you any sug-

gestion for the 14th of February, Sainte-Eulalie's fête-day? Again good-bye.

CCLXXI

CANNES, *February 17, 1864.*

DEAR FRIEND: Since you have been willing to take the trouble to read Aristophanes, I will forgive your affectations and your prudishness in reading him. Admit, however, that he is very witty, and that it would be a great pleasure to see one of his comedies played. I do not know what the opinion of erudites of our day is on the presence of women at the theatre. It is probable that there were in the same country periods of tolerance and of intolerance, but women never appeared on the stage. Their parts were played by men, which was all the easier, since the actors invariably wore masks. . . .

I am desperately ill, dear friend, and realise that I am on the way to a better world, through a path which is not the most agreeable. From time to time, the intervals of which are much more frequent than formerly, I have convulsions, and attacks of severe pain. I scarcely ever sleep; I have no appetite, and suffer from weakness, which is most exasperating. The least exercise exhausts me.

What will become of me when, instead of a magnificent sky, I shall have the leaden skies of Paris, and constant rain and fog! I am thinking, nevertheless, of returning by the end of this month, if I have the strength, for I am somewhat ashamed of doing none of my official duties. It is necessary to sacrifice one's self, and I reconcile myself to it, whatever may befall.

Since I have already waited so long, I will wait longer for Sainte-Eulalie's gift. So far as pins and rings are concerned, I fancy the embarrassment is the same as of old. Her bureau-drawers have been overcrowded with them ever since I first began to remember my cousin's fête-day. I have exhausted every variety of trinkets possible to imagine. If you have discovered anything out of the ordinary, which is not ruinous, you will have solved a tremendous problem.

There is another and still more interesting one on which I shall be obliged to consult you. It is how I shall manage, in a legitimate way or otherwise, to have some clothes sent me from London. Among your sea-dogs, it is not impossible that there is some one by whom Mr. Poole might send my clothes. Think about this, and you will render me a great service.

Good-bye, dear friend. I have had a wretched night, and coughed enough to split my

cranium. I hope you have escaped all the forms of cold which are so prevalent. In Paris it seems that every one is afflicted, and that some people even are stupid enough to die of it. Good-bye again.

CCLXXII

Friday, March 18, 1864.

I am writing to you in the Luxembourg, while the Archbishop of Rouen is thundering away at impiety. I have been very ill; I never have two good days successively, but frequently several bad ones. I am not yet sure that I shall be in any condition to go to Germany, as I had planned. It will depend on the weather and on my lungs.

I am still tied in the Luxembourg, but we shall finish the engagement, I hope, next week, and I shall then be freer. If you have not yet seen in the Louvre the new hall where the collection of vases and terra-cottas are placed, you would do well to go there. I offer you the light of my knowledge to accompany you there. You will see some things which are very beautiful, and others which will interest you, although they may shock your prudery. Appoint your day and hour.

CCLXXIII

Wednesday, April 13, 1864.

DEAR FRIEND: I regretted keenly your departure. You ought to have bidden me one more farewell. You would have found me decidedly blue. In spite of arsenic and the rest, I suffer constantly from exhaustion. After the cold abated, I was beginning to feel better, but I have taken a cold which casts me down lower than ever.

I seldom go out; still I was anxious to see my sovereigns, whom I found in excellent health. This visit gave me an opportunity of seeing the new fashions, which I do not altogether admire, especially the basques worn by the women. This is a sign that I am growing old. I can not endure the hair-dressing. There is not a single woman who dresses her hair to suit her face; they all follow the style of wigged heads. I met one of my friends who presented me to his wife. She is a young and pretty woman, but she had a foot of rouge, pencilled eyelashes, and was powdered. She disgusted me.

Have you read About's book? I have it, and it is at your service. I do not know whether it

is a success; nevertheless it is very witty. The clericals, perhaps, had good sense enough not to anathematise it, which is the most positive way of insuring the popularity of a book. It is in this way that the success of Renan, pecuniarily speaking, was achieved. I am told that he made a hundred and seventy thousand francs by his idyl.

I have still, subject to your orders, three immense volumes of Taine on the history of English literature. It is both witty and sensible. The style is somewhat affected, but it is delightful reading. I have also two volumes of Mézières on an analogous subject, the contemporaries and successors of Shakespeare. It is Taine warmed over, or, rather, cooled down. As for novels, I no longer read them.

We nominate to-morrow in the Academy either the Marseillais Autran or Jules Janin. Apparently, it will be the former. My candidate will be defeated. I have promised myself to go to the Academy no more, except to collect my allowance, eighty-three francs, twenty-three centimes, every month. During the next two years the mortality among the members will be frightful. I examined yesterday the faces of my colleagues; not to mention my own, one would suppose them to be people awaiting the coming

of the grave-digger. I can not imagine who will be elected to replace them.

When shall you return? You spoke of remaining a fortnight only at ——; but I suppose that you will, as usual, string out that fortnight into a long month. I desire earnestly to see you soon and take a walk, as we used to do, admiring radiant nature. It would be for me a rare occasion to enjoy a little poetry.

Farewell, dear friend. Write to me. If you have at your disposal none but the town library, you would do well to read *Lucian*, in the translation of Pierrot d'Ablancourt, or some one else; it would amuse you, and indulge your Hellenic tastes.

I am deep in a history of Peter the Great, which I mean to share with the public. He was an abominable man, surrounded by abominable scamps. His history amuses me no little.

Write to me as soon as you have received my letter.

CCLXXIV

LONDON, *British Museum,*
July 21, 1864.

DEAR FRIEND: You have guessed my retreat. I have been here since the last time we

met, or, to speak more exactly, since the following day. I spend my time, from eight at night until midnight, in dining out, and the morning in examining books and statues, or else in writing my long article on the son of Peter the Great, to which I am tempted to give the title: *On the Danger of Being Stupid*, for the moral to be drawn from my work is the necessity of being clever.

I think you will find, here and there, in a score of pages, some things which would interest you, notably how Peter the Great was deceived by his wife. I have translated with great care and pains the letters of his wife to her lover, who was impaled for his trouble. They are really better than one would expect of the time and country in which she wrote, but love works miracles. It was a misfortune that she did not know how to spell, which makes it extremely difficult for grammarians like myself to guess what she means.

These are my plans: I am to go, Monday, to Chevenings, to visit Lord Stanhope, where I shall stay three days. Thursday I shall dine here with a large company, leaving immediately afterwards for Paris.

They talk of nothing here but the marriage of Lady Florence Paget, the London beauty of

two seasons ago. It is impossible to see a prettier face or a more graceful figure, but too small and delicate to suit my own taste. She was notorious for her flirtations. M. Ellice's nephew, Chaplin, of whom you have often heard me speak, a tall fellow of twenty-five, with an income of twenty-five thousands pounds sterling, fell in love with her. She trifled with him a long time, then engaged herself, and it is said, accepted jewels and six thousand pounds to pay her debts with the dressmaker. The day for the marriage was appointed. Last Friday, they went together to the park and to the opera. Saturday morning she went out alone, proceeded to the Church of Saint George, and there was married to Lord Hastings, a young man of her own age, very homely, and with two petty vices, gambling and drink. After the religious ceremony they went to the country to consummate other ceremonies.

At the first stop she wrote to her father as follows:

"Dear Pa: As I knew you would never consent to my marriage with Lord Hastings, I was wedded to him to-day. I remain yours, etc."

She wrote also to Chaplin:

"DEAR HARRY: When you receive this, I shall be the wife of Lord Hastings. Forget yours, very truly, FLORENCE."

This poor Chaplin, who is six feet tall, and has yellow hair, is in despair.

Good-bye, dear friend. Write to me quickly.

CCLXXV

PARIS, *October 1, 1864.*

DEAR FRIEND: I am still here, but like a bird on the limb. I have been delayed by my proofs, and you may well understand that they need the most careful correction.

I shall start without fail on the 8th, stopping to spend the night at Bayonne, and reaching Madrid the 11th. I do not yet know how long I shall be there. From Madrid I shall go to Cannes, perhaps without passing through Paris. Winter is already making itself felt disagreeably for my lungs, in the mornings and evenings. The days are magnificent, but the evenings devilish chilly. Take care not to catch cold in the damp country in which you are staying. I enjoy myself well enough at this season in Paris, where there are no social duties, and where one may live like a hermit. From time

to time I go out to get the news, but I obtain very little.

The Pope has forbidden the painting of signs in French in Rome. They must all be in Italian. On the Corso there is a Madame Bernard, who sells gloves and garters. They have forced her to call herself henceforth Signora Bernardi. If I were the Government I should never have permitted this, even if it were necessary to hang some sign-painter in front of the first shop which they wished to change. When our army shall have departed, you will see then what those people will do. . . .

Here the sharks—that is to say, the money-lenders—are scowling on the nomination of M. —— to the Bank; but it is not known that when one is supposed to be good for nothing, it is then that they select him. It is the custom. M. —— went to the Bank, his night-cap in his pocket, expecting to sleep there the night succeeding his nomination. He was told that every preparation had been made to receive him, except the accomplishment of one small formality, which was, to purchase a hundred shares of stock of the said Bank. M. —— was completely ignorant of this little article in the charter of the establishment of which he is to be a director. A great nuisance it is, inasmuch as a hundred shares

are not to be easily found, and, besides the money it will require several weeks at least to procure them. You see how much he understands about business.

There is still another big scandal here, which amuses perverse people, but I shall not tell you about it for fear of making you angry. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCLXXVI

MADRID, *October 24, 1864.*

DEAR FRIEND: I came here by chance, for I am stopping in the country, and shall remain there until Saturday. It is abominably cold and damp, and in consequence Madame de M.'s niece has taken erysipelas. Half of the household are ill, and I have a severe cold. You are aware that colds are serious matters to me, who find it difficult enough to breathe even when I am well. The bad weather has continued a week, with shocking violence, in harmony with the fashion of this country, where transitions, of whatever sort are unknown.

Can you imagine the misery of people living on an elevated plateau, exposed to every wind that blows, and having no means of keeping warm excepting *braseros*, a primitive article of

furniture which gives one the choice of freezing or suffocating? I find that civilisation here has made great progress, which, in my eyes, is no improvement. The women have adopted your absurd hats, and wear them in the most grotesque fashion. The bulls, also, have lost much of their merit, and the men who kill them are nowadays ignorant, cowardly fellows.

This is the delightful story which now absorbs the minds of the respectable public. Lady C., the wife of the minister of ——, she young and pretty, he old and ugly, sued for divorce, on the grounds that her husband was unjust towards her. The trial took place in London, and it was decreed gallantly that he was a good-for-nothing. There are, however, women in Madrid who assume to know that it was a calumny. However that may be, the woman obtained her divorce, and almost immediately afterwards married the duke of ——, who had for some time paid court to her in Madrid. It seems that she has not the same grounds of complaint towards her new husband as she had to the former, but here is the devil of an affair. The duke of —— has sued his half-sister, the duchess of ——, on account of certain deeds, estates, etc. She has just discovered that her brother, who was born in France, in order to succeed to his

inheritance, had presented a certificate of baptism signed by a *curé*, an act which in France is illegal. It is found, moreover, that this certificate is a counterfeit, and is contradicted by the certificate of birth at the office of the Registry of State, which proves that the present duke was born in Paris several years previously, of an unknown mother. This mother is the third wife of the duke of ——, married at that time to a fourth, for in that family the marriages are always out of the ordinary.

This is going to make a pretty lawsuit, as you will see, and it is quite possible that ex-lady C. will find herself some fine morning with no peerage and no fortune. Meanwhile, she will soon arrive in Madrid with her husband, and sir J. C. has requested a change of residence.

I have taken steps to find the *Nipi* handkerchiefs, but I have not yet succeeded in discovering any. Apparently they are no longer fashionable. However, I am promised some the first of next month. I hope they will keep their word.

Everything, it seems, is quiet enough, politically speaking. Besides, at this moment it is too cold to fear a *pronunciamiento*. I think of remaining here until the 10th or 12th of November, if I do not die of my cold before then.

Where are you? What are you doing? Write to me soon.

CCLXXVII

CANNES, *December 4, 1864.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have arrived here, and find no letter from you, which grieves me very much. . . .

I pass on to another source of grievance against you. You have given me no end of trouble with your handkerchiefs. After many fruitless journeys, I discovered finally a half dozen *Nipi* handkerchiefs, hideously ugly. I took them, although everybody said they had been out of fashion for a long time; but I was following my orders. I hope you have received those six handkerchiefs, or that you will receive them in a few days. I sent them by one of my friends, whom I charged to have them delivered at your house. You asked to have them embroidered. There were none in Madrid except the six that were sent you. The plain ones seemed to me even uglier; they had red stripes, like the handkerchiefs carried by college students.

I left Madrid in deuced cold weather, and shivered the whole of the journey. I did nothing else during the entire time of my stay there.

On this side of the Bidassoa the temperature is enchantingly mild, and I find the atmosphere usually so in this country. We are having superb weather, and no wind.

I think I wrote you from Madrid everything worth telling about my acquaintances, notably the adventures of the duchess of ——, which must have shocked you. Did I mention also the young Andalusian girl in love with a young man who is discovered to be the grandson of the hangman of Havana? There are threats of suicide on the part of the mother, the daughter, and the future husband, by which I mean that all three threaten to kill themselves unless they are allowed to have their way. When I left Madrid, no deaths had occurred, and the respectable public was strongly in sympathy with the lovers.

Good-bye, dear friend. Send me some word of yourself, and tell me your plans for this winter.

CCLXXVIII

CANNES, *December 30, 1864.*

DEAR FRIEND: I wish you a happy New Year. I have written to Madrid about the unlucky handkerchiefs, and, as I have received no response, I take it for granted that my com-

missioner is in Paris, and that you have the handkerchiefs, or will have them soon. I sent them by a Spaniard who was to leave Madrid the same time as I, in consequence of which you would receive them more promptly. One should never have too high expectations. What I now desire is that you should be satisfied with those handkerchiefs, which are awfully ugly.

What think you of the Pope's Encyclical? We have a bishop here, a man of intelligence and good sense, who hides his face. Indeed, it is humiliating to belong to an army whose general exposes you to defeat.

I have no news from my editor. When I left he was printing my *Cossacks of the Past,* which I think must have appeared. As you know the story I hope you will wait until I return to procure a volume.

Do you know that from all sides have arrived congratulations on my successorship to M. Mocquard? I thought nothing of the matter; but after seeing my name in the *Belgian Independence*, in the *London Times*, and in the *Augsburg Gazette,* I had come to be a little uneasy. Knowing my temperament as you do, you may imagine how the place suited me, and how I suited the place. I have breathed more easily, however, for several days.

Are there any new novels for Christmas? English novels, I mean, for this is the period for them to bloom! I have almost no books here, and I am anxious to send for some. When at night I have an attack of coughing, and can not sleep, I am as wretched as it is possible to be. Only fancy, I have read Lamartine's *Meditations.* I have come across a Life of Aristotle, in which it is said that the retreat of the Ten Thousand took place after the death of Alexander. Really, would it not be preferable to peddle steel pens at the door of the Tuileries than to say such enormities?

Good-bye, dear friend. I have thirty-five letters to write, and I wanted to begin with you. I wish you all the prosperity in the world.

CCLXXIX

CANNES, *January 20, 1865.*

DEAR FRIEND: Have you at last received your execrable *Nipi* handkerchiefs? I have learned that the person to whom I intrusted them, having been elected a member of the Cortes, remained in Madrid, and gave the handkerchiefs to Madame de Montijo, who did not understand what they were, for a Spaniard is not conspicuously clear in making an explana-

tion. I have written to the countess Montijo, begging her to give the package to our ambassador, who will send it to you by the French mail. I hope you will have the thing before receiving my letter; but I do not wish ever again to assume the responsibility of your purchases, which force me to take more trouble and to write more prose than they are worth. The best thing for you to do is to throw the handkerchiefs into the fire.

I have suffered severely the last week from exhaustion. We are having a detestable winter, not cold, but rainy and windy. I have never experienced anything like it. For a week nearly, in spite of M. Mathieu (of the Drôme), we have had delightful, warm days, which are the greatest benefit to me, for my lungs are better, or worse, according to the height of the barometer.

I find amusement in reading the letters of the bishops. There are few lawyers more subtle than these gentlemen; but the best of them is M. D——, who interprets the Pope's Encyclical as exactly the reverse of what he really said, and it is not impossible that he may be excommunicated at Rome. Is it possible that they are hoping for a miracle to return to them Marche, the Legations, and the county of Avignon? The worst of it is, that society in this age is so stupid,

that, in order to escape the Jesuits, it will probably throw itself into the arms of the Bousingots.*

I know nothing of my works, and, if you have learned anything about them, I should be obliged if you would tell me. I corrected my proofs for the *Journal des Savants*, and for Michel Levy, and I have had no word from either of them.

The number of English here becomes daily more frightful. A new hatch has been built on the sea-shore, which is almost as large as the Louvre, and it is always full. You can not take a walk without meeting young misses in Garibaldi jackets, with impossible feather-trimmed hats, making a pretence at sketching. They have croquet and archery parties, to which come a hundred and twenty persons. I regret keenly the good old times when not a soul came here.

I have made the acquaintance of a tame sea-gull, which I feed with fish. He catches them in the air, always head first, and swallows some which are larger than my neck. Do you recollect an ostrich at the Jardin des Plantes, which you came near strangling with rye bread in the

* *Bousingots.* Slang expression: wineshop, "lush-crib." Also, a Republican or Literary Bohemian of the first years of Louis Philippe's reign.—TRANSLATOR.

time when you used to adorn the place with your presence?

Good-bye, dear friend. I expect to return soon to Paris, and to have the great happiness of seeing you there. Again good-bye. . . .

CCLXXX

CANNES, *April 14, 1865.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have delayed writing to you until I should be well, or, at least less ill; but notwithstanding the lovely weather, notwithstanding every possible attention, I am still the same—that is to say, very bad. I can not accustom myself to this life of suffering, and I have neither courage nor resignation to endure it. I am waiting until the weather becomes a little warmer before returning to Paris, and it will probably be the first of May before I arrive. Here, for the last fortnight, we have had the most glorious skies, and a sea to correspond, but it does not keep me from coughing as if it were still freezing weather.

What has become of you this spring? Shall I find you in Paris, or are you going to ——, to watch the budding of the first leaves?

So your friend Paradol becomes an Academician by the will of the burgraves, who, in fact,

have compelled the poor duc de Broglie to return to Paris, in spite of his gout and his eighty years. It will be a curious session. Ampère has written a wretchedly poor history of Caesar, and in verse, in the bargain. You may imagine all the allusions which M. Paradol will find occasion to make to this work, forgotten to-day by everybody except the burgraves. Jules Janin remained without, and also my friend Autran, who being from Marseilles, for no other reason than to be elected to the Academy, became a clerical, and was after all deserted by his religious friends.

You knew, perhaps, that Mr. William Brougham, brother of lord Brougham, and next in line to the peerage, has just been caught in the act of a very ugly piece of cheating. It is creating a tremendous scandal here among the English colony. Lord Brougham shows a bold front; he is, besides, perfectly innocent in all this villainy.

I am reading, to keep me patient and to put me to sleep, a book by a M. Charles Lambert, which demolishes the holy king David and the Bible. It seems to me quite ingenious, and tolerably amusing. The clericals have succeeded in having read and bringing into popularity serious and pedantic books, which fifteen years ago

would have attracted the attention of no one. Renan has gone to Palestine to make new researches into the scenery. Peyrat and this Charles Lambert are at work on books more erudite and more serious, which sell like hot cakes, so my bookseller tells me. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCLXXXI

PARIS, *July 5, 1865.*

I was beginning to fear that you had been struck by lightning, like Madame Arbuthnot, or that that you had been devoured by some bear. I thought you certainly in the heart of the Tyrol, when your letter arrived from ——. In my opinion it is preferable to travel in the long days rather than in autumn; but let nothing prevent you from seeing Munich in September. You must be careful only to provide yourself with warm clothing, because the weather changes very suddenly in that broad, ugly, high plain of Munich.

Nothing is easier than to make this journey. You may go to Munich by way of Strasburg, or, if you prefer, by Basel. I think that there is now a railway as far as Constance. You can, in any case, reach there by steamboat. At Constance you take the lake boat for Lindau, which

is a pretty little town; and from there to Kempten you will see a succession of admirable views. You may go to Munich direct by train, or you may stop on the route between Lindau and Kempten. From Kempten to Munich there is nothing but flat, unattractive scenery.

You must go to the Hotel Bavaria, and not to Maullich's, where I was robbed of my boots. A valet or an official guide will show you everything worthy of attention. The paintings at the palace, taken from scenes of the Nibelungen, are rather interesting, but you will need to obtain special permission to see them. All the rest is open to the public. Examine carefully, that you may tell me about them, the new propylons of my late friend Klenze. In the Museum of Antiquities you will see the pediments of the temple of Egina, and the marble group of which I have told you. The Grecian vases are extremely curious, and the paintings of *Pinacothèque* equally so. The frescoes of Cornelius and other imitations of originals will cause you to shrug your shoulders.

Go and drink some beer in the public gardens, where, for a few sous, you may enjoy excellent music. If you have the time, it will be worth your while to make a few trips into the Bavarian Tyrol, to Tegernsee, and elsewhere. When you

go to Salzburg (on which I congratulate you) you may go to see, if you like, the salt-mine of Hallein. At Innsbruck there is nothing to see but the landscape and the bronze statues of the cathedral. In all this country you may stop at any of the smallest villages, sure of finding a bed and a tolerable dinner. I should be glad to share the pleasures of the journey with you.

Here there are stories afloat of the most scandalous nature possible to imagine. . . .

This is all highly edifying, and gives rise to fear that the end of the world is at hand. Buy yourself some green stockings at Salzburg or at Innsbruck, if you find any that fit you. Bavarian legs are as big as my body.

Good-bye, dear friend. Take good care of yourself and enjoy yourself. Do not forget to let me hear from you.

CCLXXXII

LONDON, *British Museum,*
August 23, 1865.

DEAR FRIEND: After awaiting your letter a long time, in Paris, it finally arrived, written while you were in the heart of the Tyrol. I have been here for about six weeks. I was here during the concluding days of the season. I

went to some terrible dinners, and two or three of the last balls.

It seems to me that lord Palmerston has aged perceptibly, notwithstanding his success at the elections, and I feel that it is more than doubtful whether he will be in any condition to engage in the next campaign. At his retirement, there will be, doubtless, a fine crisis.

I have just spent three days at the home of his probable successor, Mr. Gladstone, who did not amuse me, but who interested me, for it is always a pleasure for me to observe the varieties of human nature. Here they are so unlike ours, that it is inexplicable how, in a ten hours' journey, one finds the featherless bipeds to be so utterly different from those in Paris.

Mr. Gladstone seemed to me to be in some respects a man of genius, in others a child. In him are the elements of the child, the statesman, and the lunatic. Staying at his house were five or six curates or deans, and every morning the guests of the castle were entertained with a short prayer in common. I was not present on a Sunday, which must be something extraordinary.

What seemed to me preferable to all the rest was a sort of badly baked roll which is removed from the oven at breakfast-time, and which one

finds it difficult to digest during the rest of the day. Besides this there is the hard *civrn*, that is the ale of Wales, which is celebrated.

You know, of course, that red hair is the only kind fashionable at the moment. It appears that nothing is easier to have in this country, and I doubt whether it is dyed.

For a month no one has been in town. There is not a single horse in Rotten Row, but I am contented enough to be in a great city in this state of lethargy. I have taken advantage of it to see the lions. Yesterday I went to the Crystal Palace, and spent an hour looking at a chimpanzee almost as tall as a ten-year-old child, and in his actions so like a child that I felt humiliated by his unquestionable relationship. Among other peculiarities, I observed the calculation of the animal in setting in motion a heavy swing, and in waiting to leap upon it until it had attained its greatest speed. I doubt whether all children would have exhibited as much talent for observation.

While here I have written a long article on the *History of Caesar*, which does not entirely displease me; in it there is mental pabulum, as they say in academic style, and next week I shall return to Paris to read it to the *Journal des Savants*. It is not quite impossible that I may

find you there. I am beginning to have enough of London.

At one time I had an idea of going to Scotland, but there I should have fallen among the hunters, a race which I abhor.

A newspaper had in its telegraphic items the news that Ponsard was dying. Since then I have seen no mention of him, and my letters, even academic ones, make no reference to him. I am quite interested in the matter; it may be, however, only a false report.

Good-bye, dear friend. Write to me in Paris, where I shall be soon, and keep me informed of your movements. Come back from the Tyrol, I pray you, with green stockings, but I defy you to bring back legs the size of those of the mountaineers.

CCLXXXIII

PARIS, *September 12, 1865, at night.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have been here for several days. I came by way of Boulogne, and while our boat was being moored at the quay there was such a crowd that I asked myself what could be so interesting in the arrival of a steam-boat. The English ladies will have to be warned that in walking at low tide along the edge of the wharf

they make a great exhibition of legs, and even more. My modesty received a shock.

Paris this year is more empty than ever, but I enjoy it in that state. I rise and go to bed late. I read a great deal, and scarcely ever get out of my dressing-gown. I have a Japanese one, with flowers on a jonquil-yellow background, more brilliant than the electric light.

My stay in England was not, after all, very tiresome. Besides a number of pleasant excursions which I made, I wrote for the *Journal des Savants* that article on the *Life of Julius Caesar*, of which I have already made mention to you. As it was the editors in person who imposed this task on me, I was obliged to acquiesce. You know how much I value the author and his book; but you may understand the difficulties of my position, not wishing to be considered as a flatterer, nor to say unbecoming things. I think I managed to get out of the difficulty fairly well.

I took for a text the fact that the Republic had reached its limit, and that the Roman people were going to the devil, if Caesar had not delivered them. As the thesis is true and easily supported, I wrote variations on this air. I will save one of the proofs for you.

Manners are still progressing. A son of prince de C. has just died in Rome. He left

a brother and sisters in straitened circumstances. He was an ecclesiastic, a monseigneur, and had an income of two hundred thousand pounds, and every penny of it he has left to a little abbé of a secretary that he had. It is precisely as if Nicomedes had bequeathed his kingdom to Caesar. I wager that you do not see the point at all.

I, too, was anxious to go to Germany, and might have surprised you, perhaps, in Munich, but my plan came to naught. I was going to see my friend, Kaullo, that excellent Jew whom I have mentioned to you more than once. But he himself is coming to France, therefore I have given up my idea of Germany. One of my friends returning from Switzerland is not enthusiastic over the weather there; which softens my disappointment.

It seems to me that Boulogne is becoming more beautiful in its buildings no less than in its citizens. I saw fish-women stylishly dressed, and very pretty modern dwellings; but what English women there were, and what pork-pie hats!

Yesterday I called to see the princess Murat, who has almost recovered from her terrible fall. The only signs still remaining are a bruised eye and a cheek slightly discoloured. She gave a

vivid account of the accident. She has lost entire consciousness of her fall, and of the following three or four hours. She remembers seeing her coachman, who was a Swiss colonel, thrown up in the air, high above her head; then, four hours later, she found herself in her own bed, with her head big as a gourd. In the interval she walked and talked, but has no recollection of anything. I hope, and think it probable, that during the last moments before death comes, there is also a loss of consciousness.

I found the countess de Montijo entirely recovered from her two operations. She is enthusiastic in praise of her oculist, Liebreich, who seems to be a wonderful man. Try never to require his services.

Good-bye, dear friend. I am going early next week, for three days, to Trouville. I shall then remain here until winter drives me away. Keep me informed of all you do, and of your intentions.

CCLXXXIV

PARIS, *October 13, 1865.*

DEAR FRIEND: I found your letter yesterday, on my return from Biarritz, whence their Majesties brought me back in a fair state of

preservation. The first welcome which my native land accorded me, however, was anything but cordial. Last night I suffered one of the most prolonged attacks of choking that I had experienced for weeks. It is the result, I suppose, of the change of temperature, or it may be the effect of thirteen or fourteen hours of jolting over a very rough railroad. It seemed as if I was in a winnowing-basket. This morning I am feeling better.

I have not as yet seen a soul, and think no one has returned to Paris, but I have received some lugubrious letters from persons who speak of nothing but cholera, and who beg me to fly from Paris. Here no one pays any attention to it, so I am told, and the fact is, I believe that, with the exception of several old topers, there have been no serious cases. If the cholera had made its first appearance in Paris, probably we should have thought no more about it. It took the cowardice of the Marseillais to give us the warning. I have informed you of my theory on the subject of cholera; no one dies of it unless he really wishes to die, and it is a visitor so polite, that it never makes a call upon you without sending its visiting-card in advance, as the Chinese do.

I spent my time most agreeably at Biarritz.

We had a visit from the king and queen of Portugal. The king is a very shrinking German student. The queen is charming. She bears a strong resemblance to the princess Clotilde, but she is more beautiful. She is a revised edition. Her complexion is that of a lily and of a rose, rare even in England. Her hair is red, to be sure, but it is the dark red so fashionable just now. She is extremely engaging and polite. They brought along with them a certain number of male and female caricatures, who seemed to have been gathered up from some curiosity-shop. My friend, the Portuguese minister, took the queen aside and gave her a little tirade about me, which her Majesty immediately repeated to me with much graciousness. The emperor presented me to the king, who shook hands with me, and looked at me with two big, round, startled eyes, that made me almost fail in my duties.

Another person, M. de Bismarck, pleased me more. He is a large German, very polite, and not at all unsophisticated. His manner is absolutely lacking in *gemüth*, but is full of intelligence. He conquered me completely. He brought with him a wife, who has the biggest feet beyond the Rhine, and a daughter who walks in her mother's footsteps.

I have said nothing of don Enrique or of the duke of Mecklenburg, I know not why. The Legitimist party is in a terrible state since the death of General Lamoricière. I met yesterday an Orleanist of the old school, who was also disconsolate. How cheaply, nowadays, one becomes a great man!

Please tell me what I may read of the good things written since I ceased to live among the cleverest people of the universe. I should like, indeed, to see you.

Good-bye. I am going to take care of my health until the fêtes at Compiègne make me ill again.

CCLXXXV

PARIS, *November 8, 1865.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have delayed writing to you, because I have been like a bird upon a bough, yet attached by the claw. After bidding adieu to my hostess at Biarritz, I had intended going to my usual wintering-place, and thus to avoid the first effects of the cold; but I was urged to remain for the opening of the season at Compiègne, and the request was asked so graciously, that I could not very well decline. Then followed the questions relating to cholera: to go

or not to go to Compiègne. Yesterday only the matter was decided. I am to go, and shall leave here the 14th, to return the 20th. Tell me now if between the 14th and after the 20th, there will be any chance of seeing you.

I returned from Biarritz in an excellent state of preservation, but after three days I experienced all the rigours incident to a change of climate. The fact is, I have been almost constantly desperately ill, not from cholera, but from my usual trouble, inability to breathe, from which may God preserve you! For several days, I have been better. I think that Compiègne will make me much worse, but I shall hasten to take my flight to the South and count on the sunshine to live through the winter, which the successors of M. Mathieu (*de la Drôme*) predict will be a severe one. You, I suppose, expect to be in a mild climate on the borders of the Loire. I hope, at any rate, that you have neither cold nor rheumatism. Would that I were able to say as much!

You can not imagine the scandalous gossip concerning the princess Anna's marriage, nor the ridiculous anger and rage of the faubourg Saint Germain. There is not a family with a daughter who did not count on the duc de Mouchy. The burning question at present is,

"If they make calls, shall we leave cards for them?"

On the other hand, there is in the marriage market at this moment a young girl with several millions in her pocket, and about fifty others to come to her. She is a pretty girl, somewhat mysterious, the daughter of M. Heine, who died this year; an adopted daughter, of course, whose origin no one knows. But in consideration of the millions, the greatest names of France, Italy, and Germany are ready to overlook all the dulness and stupidity. Adopted children of this sort are very pleasing to the goddess Fortune. The Greeks of to-day call them children of the soul; is it not a pretty name?

Have you read the *Chansons des Rues et des Bois,* of Victor Hugo? They will read them, I fancy, at ——. Will you tell me if you find a marked difference between his former poetry and that of to-day? Has he become suddenly mad, or has he always been so? For my part, I incline to the latter.

There is living at present only one man of genius: that is M. Ponson du Terrail. Have you read any of his *feuilletons?* No one equals him in dealing with crime and assassination. I revel in it.

If you were here, I should endeavour to shake

your orthodoxy by making you read a curious book on Moses, David, and Saint Paul. It is not an idyl such as Renan writes, but a dissertation, a little too larded with Greek, and even Hebrew. Still, the book is worth the trouble of reading; and, turning to the text, the story of that Yankee who, wishing to write a novel, has written a religious book, and a successful one, is but a rehash. Nothing is more common than to catch a carp when one thinks he is fishing for gudgeon. But you do not enjoy conversation like this, and you are right; there are other things to talk of.

Good-bye, dear friend. I am anxious to see you once more in the flesh.

CCLXXXVI

CANNES, *January 2, 1866.*

DEAR FRIEND: I did not know where to write to you, and this is why I have not written before. You lead such a wandering life, that no one knows where to catch you. I regretted exceedingly that I did not overtake you between Paris and ——, your two customary lairs. You have fallen into the habit of subordinating yourself, in the phraseology of the Saint Simonians of my youth. Now you are the victim of the fisher-folk at ——; again, and more often, you

are the victim of that child whom you adore, so that there is no longer any opportunity to see you as in the good old days, when it made me so happy to walk with you. Do you remember them?

I arrived here ill enough in health, after a week at Compiègne spent in tight-fitting trousers, with all the patience possible. They tried to hold me with M. de Massa's piece, but I resisted strenuously and fled to this place, where the sun has produced its usual effect. Of three days, I have had two good ones; the third even has not been very bad; a slight attack of suffocation not to be compared to the sensation of strangling which a Paris winter brings on.

Why is it that, fond of travelling as you are, and having, moreover, souls in your charge, you do not spend your winters in Pisa or in any place where the great arbiter of the health of humanity, my lord, the Sun, is to be seen? I believe that but for him I should have lain for a long time under several feet of earth.

All my friends are hastening to precede me there. Last year was rough on my little circle of comrades. Several years ago we used to dine together once a month; I think I am now the sole survivor. This is the solemn reproach which I address to the Great Engineer: Why do not

men fall like leaves, all in one season? Your Father Hyacinthe will not fail to say absurd things to me on this subject: "O man, what are ten years? What is a century?" and so on. The question for me is, What is eternity? To me the all-important thing is the small number of days. Why must mine be so bitter?

At Cannes this year are only a quarter of the foreigners who come usually. There was a story of a Parisian who ate three lobsters, and died of cholera. The country was at once placed under suspicion, and the mayors of Nice and of Cannes conceived the mistaken idea of denying in the newspapers the appearance of cholera, consequently everybody believed that it had come. A few of my friends have been as heroic as I, and we form a little colony which is quite able to dispense with the crowd.

I fear I shall be obliged to return to Paris a little after the opening of the Senate, to thunder forth all my eloquence on the bird-organ law, of which I am the advocate. I have written to M. Rouher to offer him peace, and to give him the opportunity to escape my eloquence. Will he accept it? If he is reckless enough to desire war, will you wait until the end of January to see me, and will you grant me a kind reception on New Year's day? In the event that

the affair turns towards peace, I shall ask you this in February. Good-bye, dear friend. In the meantime, I send you my best and tenderest wishes.

CCLXXXVII

CANNES, *February 20, 1866.*

DEAR FRIEND: You charge me with indolence, you, who are its personification! You, who live in Paris and discuss affairs with civilised folk, should keep me informed of what is done and said in the great city. You never tell me enough.

Is it true that crinoline is no longer in fashion, and that between the gown and the skin nothing is worn but the chemise? If this is so, shall I recognise you when I arrive in Paris? I recollect an old man who said to me when I was young, that on entering a drawing-room where there were some women without hoop-skirts and without powder, he supposed they were chamber-maids assembled in the absence of their mistresses. I am not sure that one can be a woman without crinoline.

I have allowed the address to go to vote without my presence, and it was not lost; but I shall be compelled to return soon on account of my

bird-organs.* The question is not yet concluded, and it will be necessary a second time to display my eloquence, which exasperates me excessively.

Notwithstanding the loveliest weather in the world, I have by some means succeeded in catching cold, and when I have a cold I am always dangerously ill. Breathing with difficulty ordinarily, now I do not breathe at all. Except for this I am better than I was last year. To be sure, I do absolutely nothing, which is a prime factor in being well. I brought a lot of work with me, but have not even unpacked it.

You have not mentioned Ponsard's play.† He has retained the tradition of the Corneille versification, somewhat emphatic, but broad, generous, and sincere. I fancy that fashionable society will go into ecstasies over this, as they go into ecstasies over the knowledge of M. Babinet and the sermons of the abbé Lacordaire, buying a cat in a bag, just as soon as they are persuaded that it is the proper thing. I fear that persons in skin-tight trousers, with dog-ears, and reciting verse, do not excite me to raptures of admiration.

I have just read a little book by my friend,

* Report on musical copyright, which he was appointed to present to the Senate.

† *Le Lion Amoureux.*

M. de Gobineau, on the religions of Asia. You shall judge of it on my return, if you do not prefer to read it before then. It is a very strange and curious book. In Persia it seems that there are scarcely any Mussulmans left, new religions are being made, and, as elsewhere, they are mere imitations of ancient superstitions which were believed to be a thousand times dead, and which suddenly reappear. You will be interested in a sort of prophetess, very pretty and eloquent, who was burned several years ago.

My lord, the bishop of Orleans, passed through Cannes the other day, and called to see M. Cousin, whose interest he asked in behalf of M. de Champagny. I supposed that my president, Troplong, would try to succeed M. Dupin, but he stands in awe, apparently, of our burgraves, who, indeed, would be delighted to play him a mean trick. I hear mention of Henri Martin and Amédée Thierry, both of whom are as capable of extolling M. Dupin as I of playing the double-bass. If I am in Paris, I will vote as you advise me. I expect to be in Paris early next month. What is now said and done seems to me daily to be more stupid. We are more ridiculous than they were in the middle ages. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCLXXXVIII

PARIS, *April 9, 1866.*

DEAR FRIEND: Is it not a fatality that you should be leaving just as I arrive! Fortunately, you will return soon. I have been here since Saturday night, painfully ill. When I left I could scarcely breathe, and the journey made me still more wheezy. We had a terrible storm last night, which I hope will do me a little good. I shiver at your description of that damp town of ——, and at the thought of those chilly corridors of which you give such a dismal picture. Try to wrap yourself in all your furs, and to leave the chimney-corner as seldom as possible, and then only on sunny days. I have become so sensitive to the cold, or, rather, the cold does me so much harm, that I can fancy hell in no other aspect than as the compartment of the Bolge in Dante.

Happily, I am told crinoline is no longer fashionable, which allows your legs and the rest of your body to have a little protection. I went out yesterday for an hour, and saw a woman without any crinoline, but with such extraordinary skirts that I was horrified. It seemed to me that she wore a flounced pasteboard skirt

under a gown which she held up. It made a great deal of noise on the asphalt.

It is consistent with your habits to act the reverse of common mortals, and as the country will soon be charming, I presume you will return to Paris. Be kind enough, therefore, to advise me of your movements.

I am pondering and asking myself if I shall go to the Academy Thursday to be an aid or a hindrance, after the fashion of an Immortal. Between M. Henri Martin, M. Cuvillier-Fleury, and M. de Champagny, one does not know exactly what to do. The latter, however, is a little too clerical for me, and I bear him a grudge, moreover, for having written on Roman history in journalistic style. M. Guizot, apparently, is the reigning star. He wishes to make us swallow the entire *Journal des Savants:* M. Paradol, then M. de Sacy and M. Saint-Marc. At any rate, they have humour, and a great deal of intelligence. Have you read anything of Cuvillier-Fleury? If so, tell me your opinion of him. If you will give me a genuine reward besides, I will vote for whomsoever you may designate.

English novels, meaning modern ones, are beginning to bore me to death. They were our great resource at Cannes, where M. Murray, the well-known bookseller, sends boxes of books

twice a week. Do you know of anything which will while away the time for a poor devil who dares not show his face out of doors after sunset?

Good-bye, dear friend. Think of me sometimes, and send me some news of yourself.

CCLXXXIX

PARIS, *June 24, 1866.*

What has become of you? The cholera, it seems, is very bad at Amiens. I do not know what is in store for us at the Luxembourg, and it may be that the Senate-Council, with which we are threatened, will oblige me to return here until the middle of the month.

To console myself, I have bought the twenty-seven volumes of the *Mémoires du XVIII^e^ Siècle,* which I shall have bound. Is there in them anything which you would like? Your Klincksieck has nothing that one asks for; I shall inquire of Vieweg, who may have, perhaps, what I want. Unfortunately, the edition of the *Mémoires de F. Auguste,* which was published in Leipzig, is in the hands of M. de Bismarck.

I was surprised to receive the book you returned to me. I was afraid that you had added it to those which you have already taken from

me. When will you come and choose another? In spite of the heat, I am far from well.

You asked me, the other day, where I formed my acquaintance with the dialects of the Bohemians. I had so many things to say to you that I forgot to answer. I obtained it from M. Borrow; his book is one of the most curious that I have ever read. What he retails of the Bohemians is perfectly true, and his personal observations agree entirely with mine, except on one point. In his quality as a clergyman he might well have been mistaken, where, in my quality as a Frenchman and a layman I could make conclusive experiments. What is most singular is that this man, who has a gift for languages to the degree that he speaks the Cali dialects, has so little perspicacity that he is unable to see at the outset that in this dialect have remained many words foreign to the Spanish. He pretends that the roots only of Sanskrit words have been retained. . . .

I like the odour of that perfume, but I like it less since I have known that the friend who gave it to you sees you so often.

CCXC

PALACE OF SAINT-CLOUD,
August 20, 1866.

DEAR FRIEND: I received your letter last night. I thank you for your congratulations.* The thing astonished me as much as you. I say to myself, like the *Cocu* imaginaire: Does one's leg become more crooked, after all, or one's shape less beautiful?

I beg your pardon for quoting lines from a play which you have not read because of its title.

You take a singular route to go to your friends in the land of the sea-monsters, but if you can have a little sunshine you will experience much pleasure in seeing the banks of the Loire. There is nothing in all France more typically French, and what is seen there, besides, can be found nowhere else. I recommend to you especially the Château of Blois, which has been well restored in the last few years. See, for my sake, the new church of Tours, restored. It is on the Rue Royale, on the right side coming from the station; I have forgotten the name of

* On his nomination as Grand Officer in the Legion of Honour.

it. See also, in Tours, a house which is called, improperly, the House of the Executioner, and which is attributed to Tristan the Hermit, because of a sculptured girdle, the emblem of a widow, and which the ignorant take for a hangman's rope. It is on the street of the Three Virgins, another distressing name.

We are having deplorable weather. Yesterday I took a long drive, and we were surprised by a terrific storm, which soaked me to the bones and gave me new cold. The water accumulated on the cushions, so that it was like being in a bath-tub. I think I shall be in Paris the last few days of this month, and set out again for Biarritz the beginning of September. Will you not come there when you leave the banks of the Loire? . . .

The emperor has entirely recovered and has resumed his usual occupations. We spend the days comfortably enough, considering the horrible weather, and without any formality. We dine in frock-coats, and every one does pretty much as he pleases.

I have received from Russia an enormous history of Peter the Great, compiled from a quantity of official documents, hitherto unpublished. I read and I paint whenever we are not walking or eating.

It seems to me that everything tends in the direction of peace. It is very evident that M. de Bismarck is a great man, and he is too well prepared for any one to quarrel with him. We shall have, perhaps, many bitter pills to swallow, and these we shall digest until we have needle-guns. It remains to be seen what the German parliament will do, and, if the follies which they commit will not cause them to lose their advantage. As for Italy, it is never even mentioned. Good-bye dear friend.

CCXCI

BIARRITZ, *September 24.*

I hope you may be enjoying better weather than we. Four days of the week we have rain; the others are stifling hot, accompanied by a horrible sirocco. Still, the sea is far more beautiful here than at Boulogne, and the figs and ortolans make it possible to sustain the burden of life.

I made, the other day, an interesting excursion into the mountains, and saw one of the most remarkable grottoes in existence. You pass beneath a great natural bridge, made of a single arch, as long as the Pont Royal; on one side you see a wall of rocks, and on the other a tunnel, natural also, and very long. For nature, less

clever than the engineers, contrived to make her bridge lengthwise, and the tunnel is the extension of this. Under the tunnel, and perpendicular to the bridge, flows a limpid stream. The proportions of all this are gigantic. The air within is very cool, and one feels as if he were a thousand leagues from humanity. I will show you a sketch of it, made on horseback. This enchanting place, which is called simply Sagarramedo, is in Spain, and if it were in the suburbs of Paris some one would make a show place of it, charge fifty centimes admission and make his fortune.

In another cavern, a league's distance from the first, but in France, we found about twenty smugglers, who sang some Basque airs in chorus, to the accompaniment of the galoubet. This is a small, shrill flageolet, which has in its tones something exceedingly wild and agreeable. The music is full of character, but mournful enough to drive the devil into the ground, like all the mountaineers' music. As for the words, I understood only *viva emperatrica!* of the last couplet.

We were guided to the place by a singular man, who has made a large fortune smuggling. He is the king of these mountains, and everybody is subject to his commands. Nothing

could have been finer than to see the way he galloped among the rocks beside our column, which had great difficulty in following the beaten paths. He dashed over every obstacle, calling to his men in Basque, in French, and in Spanish, and never once making a false step. The empress had charged him to watch over the prince imperial, whom he made pass, him and his pony, over the most impossible routes that you may imagine, and watching over him as carefully as if he had been a bale of contraband goods. We rested for an hour in his home at San, where we were received by his daughters, who are well-bred persons, stylishly dressed, not in the least provincial, and differing from Parisians only in their pronunciation of the *r*, which for the Basques is always *r-r-r-h*.

We are expecting the armoured fleet; but the sea is so rough, that if it came we could not communicate with it. There are not many people at Biarritz, some startling costumes, and few pretty faces. Nothing could be uglier than the bathers with their black costumes and caps of oil-cloth.

I have been presented to the duc de Leuchtenberg, who is quite friendly. I discovered that he read Schopenhauer, believed in positive philosophy, and had a leaning towards socialism.

I expect to be in Paris early in October. Shall you not be there? I should be glad to see you before I go into winter quarters. I am growing scandalously stout, and my breathing is much better than in Paris.

Good-bye, dear friend. I have written a droll little thing, which may amuse you, if you should condescend to listen.

CCXCII

PARIS, *October 5, 1866.*

We are to be, then, like Castor and Pollux, who can never appear upon the same horizon! I returned several days ago. I have made a trip to the post-office, and return to pack my trunk for departure. I am obliged to go, for the first touch of frost is very disagreeable to feel, and I have begun to cough and strangle.

Besides the pleasure which would have been mine in seeing you, I had been promising myself that of reading you something which I had translated from the Russian. At Biarritz they were discussing, one day, the difficult situations in which one might find one's self, as, for example Rodrigue between his papa and Chimène, Mademoiselle Camille between her brother and her

Curiace. That night, having drunk tea which was too strong, I wrote about fifteen pages on a situation of this sort. The thing is very moral in reality, yet there are some details of which Monseigneur Dupanloup might disapprove. There is, also, a begging the question necessary for the development of the plot: two persons of different sex go to an inn; this has never been known, but it was necessary for my story, and while there they have a remarkable experience. Although written in great haste, it is not, I think, the worst thing I have ever done. I read it to the lady of the house.

At the same time there was also at Biarritz the grand duchess Marie, daughter of Nicolas, to whom I had been presented several years ago. We renewed our acquaintance. Shortly after my reading I received a visit from a policeman, saying he had been sent by the grand duchess. "What may I do for you?" "I have come from her imperial highness, to beg you to come to her house to-night with your novel." "What novel?" "The one you read, the other day, to her Majesty." I replied that I had the honour to be her Majesty's jester, and that I could not work for any one else without her permission. I hastened at once to relate the thing to her. I expected the result would be, at the very least,

a war with Russia, and I was no little mortified not only to receive permission to go, but even to go that evening to the grand duchess, to whom had been given the policeman as factotum. Nevertheless, to console myself, I wrote the grand duchess a pretty energetic letter, and announced my visit. I was on the way to carry my letter to her house; there was a high wind, and in a secluded by-street I met a woman who was in danger of being blown into the sea by her skirts, into which the wind had entered. She was in the greatest bewilderment, blinded and dazed by the noise made by her crinoline, and all the other tumult. I rushed to her assistance. It was with the greatest difficulty that I succeeded in giving her any effective aid, and then only recognized the grand duchess. The windstorm saved her from a number of little epigrams. She was, moreover, quite friendly with me, and gave me some excellent tea and cigarettes; for she smokes, as nearly all Russian ladies do. Her son, the duke of Leuchtenberg, is a handsome fellow, with the manner of a German student. He seemed to me, as I mentioned before, a good-natured chap, affable, with a tendency slightly Republican and Socialistic, and a Nihilist in the bargain, like the *Bazarof* of Tourguenieff; for in these days princes do not

consider the Republic a form of government progressive enough for their tastes.

Good-bye, dear friend. Write to me here, but do so immediately. I do not release you from sending me news of yourself. What say you to the spectacle of a flood? You have had the experience, with all its variations. One of my friends scarcely touched food for two days, in the anxiety of seeing his house dissolve beneath him, like a lump of sugar. Again good-bye.

CCXCIII

CANNES, *January 3, 1867.*

I received your letter with great remorse. For a long time I have wanted to write to you, but, in the first place, an uncertainty as to your abode is a great vexation. You are always on the wing, and no one knows where to catch you. In the second place, you have never replied to a long letter, written with great care, which I sent to you. Moreover, you can not imagine how the time passes in a place like this, where it never rains, and where the principal thing to do is to warm one's self in the sun, or to paint trees and rocks.

I brought with me books for work, but as yet I have done nothing but read and take notes

from a history of Peter the Great, about which I should like some day to write an article for the *Journal des Savants*. The great man was a downright savage, who used to get horribly tipsy, and committed an error against good taste, concerning which I found you very severe when you used to study Greek literature. For all that, he was without question a man in advance of his age. I should like to say all this some day to persons as full of prejudice as yourself.

As for the story about which I told you, I have said that I would read it to you when I have the pleasure of seeing you once more. I am not thinking of having it published. As there is in this work nothing favourable to the temporal power of the Pope, I suspect that it might not meet with a cordial reception. Are you not touched and humiliated by the profound stupidity of the present time? Everything that is said both for and against the temporal power is so silly and absurd, that I blush for my century. . . .

Another thing that enrages me is the manner in which the proposition for the reorganization of the army has been received. All well-born young persons are dying of terror at the thought of being called upon at a moment's notice to fight for their country, and say that these vulgar oc-

cupations should be left to the Prussians. Try to imagine what will remain of the French nation if she should come to lose her military courage!

I am reading the novel of my friend Madame de Boigne.* It is pitiful. She is a woman of much intelligence, who lays bare her own defects, and criticises them with excessive bitterness, but who still persists in them. She passed more than thirty years without saying a word to me of this novel, and in her will she ordered its publication. It was as great a surprise to me as if I had learned that you had just published a treatise on geometry.

Although the subject is not an agreeable one, I must tell you something of my health. I am becoming more and more short-breathed. Sometimes I feel as robust as a Turk. I take long walks, and it seems to me that I am as well as when we used to tramp through our woods together. The sun goes down, my chest becomes inflated, I suffocate and the slightest exertion is very painful. The singular thing is, that I am no worse. I am even better in a horizontal position than when standing or sitting.

Good-bye, dear friend. I wish you health and prosperity.

* *Une Passion dans le Grand Monde.*

CCXCIV

PARIS, *Thursday, April 4, 1867.*

DEAR FRIEND: Here I am, at last, in Paris, but more dead than alive. I have not written, because I was too melancholy, and had only doleful things to tell you of myself and of this sublunary world. You will find me very miserable, but happy to see you again.

Friday morning, if the weather be fine, we might walk together to the Museum of the Louvre. I dare hardly go out, I have such a dread of the cold, but I am ordered to take exercise.

I send you the eighth volume of Guizot, which will entertain you. The dull weather depresses me, and makes me *much* worse. I hope you are still in great prosperity.

My house is undergoing improvements, and I am reduced to living in my salon, which is as gloomy as a prison. Come and cheer me up. You shall carry away all the books you like, and I shall not require you to leave me anything as security.

Good-bye, I shall see you soon, I hope.

CCXCV

PARIS, *Friday, April 30, 1867.*

DEAR FRIEND: I am very sorry to know that you are surrounded by sick persons. This makes me fear that you have no thought of me, who am worse than ever in this bad weather. Will you not come and take care of me one of these days?

I went, nevertheless, to the Exposition, and was not at all carried away with it. It is true that it was pouring rain, and impossible to see the amusements, which I am told are in the garden. I saw some exquisite Chinese articles, too dear for my purse; and some Russian rugs, all sold.

You will have to take me there one of these fine mornings, and guide me in my acquisitions. You seem to be enchanted with this bazaar; perhaps your enthusiasm will kindle mine.

The dull, rainy weather is very injurious to me. I dare not go out, and I live like a bear. I am dying to go to see you some evening, but I am convinced that I should be compelled to spend the night on the first step of your stairway.

Do you know of any amusing book to read

at night? While waiting for something better, I am writing for the *Journal des Savants* an article on the princess Sophie, sister of Peter the Great. I do not know if it would interest you. I will read it to you next time I see you.

CCXCVI

Wednesday, June 26, 1867.

DEAR FRIEND: Would it not have been better to bring me your flowers yourself? You have pained me greatly in sending them. I am still very ill; but how can I get well in such weather?

Read Sainte-Beuve's speech;* it will amuse you. It is impossible for one to be more witty. But if he really wishes what he asked for, he has taken the best means of being refused. I do not know what will be the result of his interchange of epigrams with M. Lacaze, but I fear it will end in a duel. It is impossible to conceive of the expression of hatred and profound scorn on his face as he read, for he read his speech, which was somewhat detrimental to its effect.

I have sent you my condolences on the loss of your purse at the Exposition. Return the

*On popular libraries, at the session of the Senate, June 25, 1867.

compliment, for I have left mine in a carriage. I am inquiring everywhere for tickets for the ceremony of July 1st. I am unwilling to take any but the best places for you, and I can find none.

CCXCVII

PARIS, *Sunday, June 30, 1867.*

DEAR FRIEND: Here are two tickets for to-morrow's ceremony.* They deserve a rare tip, for I had a great deal of trouble in procuring them. I send them to you in haste. Try not to be ill. It will be terribly hot!

CCXCVIII

Friday, July 5, 1867.

DEAR FRIEND: I am delighted that you enjoyed yourself. I was afraid of the heat, and of the weight of my harness. You looked for me in vain. I did not go. Come soon, and tell me the beautiful things you saw, and give me your opinion of the sultan and the princes, who had the privilege of gazing on you for three hours.

I think that this fusillade † will injure our

* Distribution of prizes to the exhibitors.

† The death of Maximilian.

affairs, which were progressing well. It is a great pity.

CCXCIX

PARIS, *July 27, 1867.*

DEAR FRIEND: Thanks for your letter. I continue so ill, that I did not write to you at once, hoping to give you more hopeful news of myself; but no matter what I do and what I swallow, I still have this horrible cold. I shall not give you the details of my ills, but you may be sure that I am overcome by them. I hope you will sympathise with me. I neither sleep nor eat. I envy you these two faculties, which you possess with many others.

I congratulate you on having met the sultan for so long a time. Did he exhibit more amiability towards your sex than he did in Paris? They tell me that he gave great dissatisfaction at the opera. The pasha of Egypt was much more gracious. He made two visits to Mademoiselle ——, which I dare not describe to you, although they were curious. He has become reconciled (I am speaking of the pasha) with his cousin Mustapha, but it has been impossible to have them drink coffee together, each one being persuaded that it would be too dangerous on account of the rapid progress of the science of chemistry.

If you had been in Paris you would have seen something very beautiful which was presented to me. It is a brooch in the form of a fleur-de-lis shield, containing a miniature portrait of Marie Antionette, painted in Vienna, probably, before her marriage, and given by her to the princess de Lamballe. There was once in the back of the brooch a lock of hair, but it has been removed. After a fine show of resistance to the temptation, I yielded, and sent it promptly to her Majesty, who is making a collection of objects which belonged to Marie Antoinette. This will be, assuredly, one of her prettiest souvenirs; besides which, it is said to be absolutely authentic, and was worn for a long time by Madame de Lamballe. These sad antiquities fill me with horror, but it is vain to dispute about tastes.

Madame —— is still making a great scandal, and openly. I am sorry that I am not at liberty to write you all that she says and does. It is asserted that in Italy are two other wives of ministers more extravagantly wild than she. . . .

I think you might have been a little more polite, and borrowed my proofs from me. Nothing is more painful to an author than neglect of this sort. August 1st, a second article appeared, and you will be compelled to fortify

yourself against three or four others. If you could invent some euphemism to explain to the reader the secret of Mentchikof's influence with Peter the Great, it would be an immense favour to me.

Read also, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes,* M. Collin's article on trades unions (it is by M. Libri), and a letter of M. d'Haussonville to prince Napoleon, which is highly calculated to spoil his taste for newspaper polemical articles.

Sainte-Beuve continues quite ill. He is surrounded by numbers of women, like the sultan Saladin. You shall not persuade me that you are having at —— any better weather than here —that is to say, continuous gusts of rain and wind.

When are you coming back? I need you very much, to tell me what is going on, and to help me bear my misfortunes in patience—something very difficult to do. The other night, when it was almost impossible for me to breathe, I read Luther's Table-Talk. This big man pleases me, with all his prejudices and his hatred of the devil. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCC

PARIS, *September 6, 1867.*

DEAR FRIEND: I received your letter, which gave me much pleasure. The dampness of the climate where you are must be greatly ameliorated, I fancy, by this excessive heat. As for me, I find myself much better for it, and I am breathing, not with full lung-power, but more easily than I have done in a long time. However, I had the courage to refuse the gracious invitation which the empress renewed as she was leaving.* I do not feel sure enough of myself to stand any exposure to the danger of illness, and although I was assured of the best of care, I thought it prudent and discreet to take no risks. Perhaps, if the warm weather continues, I may experiment with my strength by spending a few days in the country at my cousin's. It may be that the change of air will be good for me, and there is every indication that the crowds of foreigners who are thronging Paris are injuring our atmosphere.

I visited the Exposition the other day, and saw the Japanese women, who pleased me un-

* For Biarritz.

commonly. They have a complexion of cream-colour, of an agreeable shade. So far as I could judge by the drapery of their gowns, they have legs as slender as the sticks of a chair, which is too bad. As I observed them, along with the crowd of loungers surrounding them, I thought to myself that European women would not make so good an impression before a Japanese audience. Imagine yourself on exhibition thus at Yeddo, and a grocer of prince Satsuma saying: "I should like to know whether that hump on the back of this lady's gown is really growing there." Speaking of humps, they are no longer worn at all, which proves that they did not grow there; for all women found themselves at the same instant in the fashion.

I am reading an abominable book by Madame —— aimed against M. S., whom she calls M. T.; it is the very limit of all that is indecent. For all that, it shows evidence of ability of a certain sort. . . .

I have written for the *Moniteur* an article remarkable for the amenity of its style, on the subject of an amusing Spanish chronicle. I will lend it to you one of these days, provided that you will return it. You will see therein how people lived in Spain and France in the fifteenth century.

Good-bye. Keep well; do not take cold, and write me some word of yourself.

CCCI

PARIS, *September 27, 1867.*

DEAR FRIEND: What has become of you? It is an age since I heard from you. I have just done something reckless: I spent three days at my cousin's home in the country, near Arpajon, and I feel very little the worse for it, although the country seemed to me cold and damp. I do not believe, however, that it is warm anywhere, nowadays. I suppose that at —— you are enveloped in constant fogs.

I spend my time as well as I can, in absolute solitude. I am seized sometimes with the desire to travel, but the impulse does not last long enough to amount to anything. Moreover, I am terribly depressed. I believe something serious is the matter with my eyes. I wish, and at the same time I dread, going to consult Liebreich; yet, if I should lose my sight, what would become of me?

In society there is a certain prince Augustine Galitzin, who has become a convert to Catholicism, and who is not very proficient in Russian. He has translated a novel by Tourguenieff, the

title of which is *Smoke.* It is now coming out in *Le Correspondent,* a clerical newspaper, some of the capital of which is furnished by the prince. Tourguenieff has asked me to review the proofs. Now, in this novel are some rather lively situations, which are the despair of prince Galitzin; for instance, something unheard-of: A Russian princess is in love, which is made worse by adultery. He skips the passages which shock him too deeply, and I reinstate them in the text. He is sometimes over-sensitive, as you shall see. The great lady condescends to visit her lover in a hotel, at Baden. She enters the room, and the chapter concludes. The story is resumed in the Russian original as follows: "Two hours later, Litvinof was alone on his divan." The neo-Catholic has translated it thus: "An hour later, Litvinof was in his *room.*" You see it is much more moral, because to suppress an hour is to diminish the sin by half. Then, *room,* instead of *divan,* is much more virtuous, a divan being associated with criminal acts. I, inflexible in carrying out my orders, have reinstated the two hours and the divan, but the chapters in which they occur have not been published in *Le Correspondent* of this month. I suppose the respectable people who edit it have exercised a strict censorship. I am greatly amused by it. As the

story continues, there is a delightful scene, in which the heroine tears up some point lace, which is a much more serious matter than the divan. I am waiting to see what they will do with this.

Good-bye, dear friend. Let me hear from you. I am terrified by the rapidity with which winter is approaching.

CCCII

PARIS, *Monday night,*
October 28, 1867.

You speak of vegetating. Indeed, that is the sort of life one would wish to lead nowadays, but the age is one of movement. Human vegetables are as unfortunate as those which live at the foot of Etna. From time to time upon them falls a deluge of fire, which usually annihilates them by its sulphurous vapours.

Do you not consider it calamitous that Pius IX and Garibaldi, both fanatics, should, by their obstinacy, turn everything into confusion? As an evidence of the morals of the age is the reply of those who disapprove the sending of our troops to Rome, when they are reminded of the treaty of September 15th: "What matters a treaty? M. de Bismarck does not observe them." I should like to steal a watch from one of them,

and then say that there have been precedents of watches being stolen. The most deplorable feature of the whole matter is, that we are pledging ourselves anew, for I know not how long a time, to protect the Pope, who shows not the slightest gratitude towards us. . . .

Le Correspondent has yielded, and is publishing the continuation of Tourguenieff's novel, without, however, permitting the interview between Litvinof and Irène to last more than one hour. I think I told you about it. Are you reading it? *Le Correspondent* certainly goes to ——, where you are. Anyway, I will give you the novel on your return.

I am still ill, breathing painfully, and at night not breathing at all. This sudden death of M. Fould has grieved me very much. It was, however, as easy as one could wish; but why so sudden? He wrote eighteen letters the same morning of his death, and two hours before retiring seemed perfectly well. He had not made the least movement after lying down, and his features bore no evidences of contraction. His death was precisely the same as that of Mr. Ellice; "a visitation of God" is what the English call it.

I am expecting to start early in November. I am urged to go, in order to escape colds, which

are so difficult to avoid in Paris. I am finishing an article for the *Moniteur,* on a Greek manuscript, and shall depart just as soon as it is completed.

Good-bye, dear friend. I hope you will come back before I go. Abandon those hideous fogs, and take care of your health. Again, good-bye. . . .

CCCIII

PARIS, *November 8, 1867.*

DEAR FRIEND: I send you a word in haste, written in the midst of the errand which I am compelled to do. I leave to-morrow for Cannes, seriously ill; but there I hope to live in sunlight and warmth. Here we have it cold and almost frosty. I no longer go out at night, and never put my nose out of doors except when the temperature becomes a little milder.

I do not know how long I shall be able to stay away; it depends somewhat on the Pope, on Garibaldi, and on M. de Bismarck. Like every one else, I am more or less in the hands of these gentlemen. I know nothing more shameful than this affair of Garibaldi. If ever a man was under obligation to commit suicide, it is he, assuredly. What is even more lamentable is the

fact that the Pope is quite convinced that he is under no obligation to us, and that it was Heaven which managed everything for his sake. Good-bye, dear friend. . . .

CCCIV

CANNES, *December 16, 1867.*

DEAR FRIEND: I was very anxious about you, when I was relieved by the arrival of your letter. You have guessed that these many changes of weather through which we have passed, have done me no good. In the last twenty-four hours we have even had snow, to the enormous astonishment of the urchins and curs of the place. Such a thing is unprecedented in twenty years. Nothing could be more amusing than the amazement depicted on the faces which had never seen this phenomenon from a nearer range than the Alps. Everybody expected to see the flowers, orange-trees, and even the olive-trees, destroyed; but they all stood it remarkably well, and only the flies have been killed.

For several days we have had a return of fine weather, and my breathing begins to be somewhat less difficult. I am always at the mercy of every change of temperature, and there is no

barometer to which I am not superior in the accuracy of my predictions.

I am greatly alarmed by the political situation; in the general tone of the journals and of the orators, I find something suggestive of 1848. There are strange freaks of anger, without any apparent causes. All nerves are tense. After spending his whole life amid political struggles, M. Thiers is seized with nervous excitement because a lawyer of Marseilles repeats platitudes deserving of nothing more than a smile. The most unfortunate feature has been the attitude of M. Rouher, who wishes to out-Herod Herod, and who has given utterance to sentiments obnoxious to politics—a thing from which all ministers ought to abstain.

I am discontented with everybody, beginning with Garibaldi, who does not understand his trade. To go to Caprera, after having murdered several hundred simpletons, seems to me the very limit of mortification for the advocates of revolution, and the English noblemen who took this creature for something more than a mountebank.

What shall I say to you of the politics of M. Ollivier and *tutti quanti?* It is useless for them to express themselves in elegantly turned phraseology, and to assert that they are pro-

foundly convinced; they impress me as second-rate actors who imitate the rôles of their betters, in such a fashion as to deceive no one. We become smaller day by day. It is only M. de Bismarck who is a really great man.

By the way, could it be true that he has spent his private fortune? I consider the purchase of the journals as highly probable. But, as M. de Bismarck will not send his receipts to M. de Kerveguen, I fancy these gentlemen will come out of the affair honourably.

I see nothing worth reading but the *Histoire de Pierre le Grand,* by M. Oustisalef. I have just sent to the *Journal des Savants* a long article, full of tormenting details, etc. It is on the destruction of the Muscovite guards. Good-bye. . . .

CCCV

CANNES, *January 5, 1868.*

DEAR FRIEND: Pardon my delay in replying to your letter. I have been, and am still, extremely ill. The cold, which has penetrated even so far as this, is very harmful to me. It is said that in Paris it is much more severe, and that you have no cause to envy Siberia. I am sometimes, the greater part of the day, unable to

breathe. There is no sharp pain in this, but a discomfort of the most wearisome kind, which reacts severely on the nerves. You know me well enough to understand how well I endure all this.

Moreover, I am suffering great anxiety on account of my poor friend Panizzi, who is dangerously ill in London. The latest news was somewhat comforting, but there is still little ground for reassurance: He is discouraged about himself, which is always a bad symptom in sick people.

Amidst all my sorrows, I am killing time as I may. I send to-day to the *Journal des Savants* the end of the first part of *Pierre le Grand*—for there are first and second parts in this, as in the novels of Ponson de Terrail—and to the *Moniteur*, a long critique on Poushkin. All this you will see in its proper time and place.

I am now reading a book which is too long, and badly written, but the author of which seems to be honest, and describes what he has seen and heard. One must pass over his reflections, for in these he is a little silly. The book is Dixon's *New America*. He has seen the Mormons, and, what is still more curious, the Republic of Mount Lebanon. This and Fenianism give one an idea of America. Decidedly Talleyrand's epigram defines it exactly.

Good-bye, dear friend, I wish you health and happiness.

CCCVI

CANNES, *February 10, 1868.*

DEAR FRIEND: I am distressed to learn of the death of M. D. I saw him at ——, I do not know how many years ago. He was devotedly fond of you, and while the death of friends of eighty years should be expected at any moment, still it always comes as a thunder-clap. One of the greatest sorrows of those who live to be aged is to lose our friends day by day, and to realise that we are more and more alone in the world. . . .

For my own part, my thoughts are melancholy, and my mood gloomy. I have not yet succeeded in accustoming myself to suffering, and it irritates me, which gives me two ills instead of one. I think I shall stay here at least until the end of this month, in which case I have some hope of finding you in Paris. I am delighted that my essay on Poushkin did not bore you. The best thing about it is that I wrote it without having the works of Poushkin by me. The quotations I gave are verses that I committed to memory in the time of my fervour for all things Russian.

There are many Russians here, and I had charged one of my friends to borrow a volume of miscellaneous poems, if there was one in the Muscovite colony. He inquired of an uncommonly pretty woman, who, instead of poems, sent me a big piece of fish from the Volga, and two birds from the same country, all cooked a few metres from the north pole. It was rather good. Judging from the slice sent to me, the fish must have been a jolly fellow from five to six feet in length. This lady, who is called Madame Voronine, has a charming head. Her husband has the appearance of a veritable Calmuc. At first he refused the hand of the lady. He shot himself, the ball missed, and for his trouble he was made to marry her.

As for English, men and women, never have there been such a lot of them, with impossible hair and toilettes, with red hair and overcoats lined with grebe skins, and with parasols. During the last two weeks the parasols have been more serviceable than the furs, for the weather is magnificent, and the sun hot as in June. Among other extraordinary Englishmen is the duke of Buccleugh, who has a horn in the middle of his forehead. His son shows a disposition to follow his example. Do not imagine that I am speaking metaphorically; it is a real horn grow-

ing on the cranium, and it will end, I fear, by playing them a bad trick.

I told you that I had *Smoke*, bound in a volume expressly for you. I might send it to you if you wished it; but I believe that I recall your having taken home the numbers of the *Correspondent* in which it is found. It is one of the best things that M. Tourguenieff has ever done.

The discussion on the press is disgusting to me. Every one tells too many lies, and not an idea is heard that has not been already expressed twenty times in better terms. It seems to me that the level of intelligence is rapidly sinking lower, like that of honesty. It is indeed sad.

Yesterday I met one of my friends returning from Mentana. He told me that the Garibaldians were thoroughly whipped; that they were a singular mixture of abominable riff-raff and of the flower of the aristocracy.

Good-bye, dear friend. Take good care of yourself, and do not forget me.

CCCVII

MONTPELLIER, *April 20, 1868.*

DEAR FRIEND: Before coming here I was so ill that I lost all courage; it was impossible for me to think, and yet I was under the strongest ne-

cessity to write. I learned by chance that in Montpellier there was a physician who treated asthma by a new method, and I resolved to try it. During the five days since I began the treatment it seems to me that my condition has improved, and the physician encourages me to be hopeful.

Every morning I am placed in an iron cylinder, which, I must confess, looks like one of those monuments of M. de Rambuteau. Within is a comfortable easy-chair, and apertures with windows, which admit light enough to read. An iron door is closed, and the air in the cylinder is them compressed by means of a steam-engine. After a few seconds you feel as if needles were sticking in your ears, but, gradually, you become accustomed to the sensation. What is more important is that you begin to breathe with marvellous ease. At the end of a half hour I fall asleep, notwithstanding the fact that I have brought with me the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. I have already taken four of these compressed-air baths, and feel that I am perceptibly better. The physician who treats me, and who has none of the characteristics of a charlatan, assures me that my case is not hopeless, and promises to cure me with about fifteen baths or so.

I hope I may see you soon in Paris. I regret

my absence from the discussion which will take place on the subject of the medical theses. Have you read the letter of abbé Dupanloup? The soul of Torquemada has taken refuge in his body, and if we do not look out, he will burn us all at the stake. I fear that the Senate on this occasion will say and do everything possible to make itself ridiculous and odious. You can have no idea of how afraid of the devil, nowadays, are those old warriors who have been through such a multitude of dangers. I do not know if Sainte-Beuve will be in a condition to speak, as the papers announce; I doubt it, and, besides, I am uncertain whether he will attack the question from the proper position;—I mean, in such a way as to avert the bombshell. His business is to speak out his mind, without regard to consequences, as he has already done on the occasion of Renan's book. All these things irritate and torment me.

We are having admirable weather, but the natives are bewailing it bitterly, for they have had no rain for a year. The dry weather, however, does not hinder the leaves from growing, and the country is magnificent.

Unfortunately, I am detained indoors all the morning, and seldom have a chance to walk. There is a fair in progress under my windows.

Opposite me they are exhibiting a giantess, in a satin gown which she raises to show her legs. Their diameter is almost that of your waist.

I will bring you the translation of *Smoke*. I have begun an essay on Tourguenieff, but do not know if I shall have the strength to finish it here. Nothing is more difficult than to work on a hotel diet. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCCVIII

PARIS, *June 16, 1868*.

. . . I suppose you are having about the same weather that we are enjoying—that is to say, perfectly lovely, and that you are no longer suffering from excessive dampness, which is the unfortunate feature of P. Here, the early summer is ravishing. I went, day before yesterday, to the Bois de Boulogne, where I saw the most stunning costumes. I met one very beautiful woman, dressed in an extraordinary fashion, and whose hair was a lovely gold-colour. I could have sworn that she was a young woman from the rue de Breda, but I came to recognise her as the wife of a general. Her hair formerly was a dark chestnut. Customs are making singular progress.

A well-known society man was living in

marital relations with the wife of another man. Returning to his apartment one day, he found her there with a third man. Upon this, he went to the husband, and said to him: "I know that you wish to have proofs of criminal intercourse, in order that you may obtain a divorce from your wife. I bring you these proofs." He left with him a package of letters, and they separated, with expressions of mutual esteem. It does not appear that he has been expelled from his club, or excluded from any salon to which he has had access.

M. Tourguenieff has just sent me a very short, but very pretty novel, entitled *The Brigadier*. It is now being translated, and if the proofs are sent to me, I will share them with you. English novels are getting to be so horribly dull that I can not take to them. Here, it seems that there is no one but M. Penson de Terrail, but his stories are too short.

I expect to go to London by the end of the month. I hope to see you in Hastings and in Paris, towards the end of July. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCCIX

CHÂTEAU DE FONTAINEBLEAU,

August 4, 1868.

DEAR FRIEND: I have been here about a fortnight, feeling tolerably well, and finding absolute idleness good for body and mind. Our last walk left me a sweet memory. Is it so with you? Here, I walk a little, read less, and breathe fairly well. It is a pleasure to look at the sky and the trees.

There is no one at the château, or, rather, not more than thirty persons, of whom the only outsiders, besides myself, are several cousins of the empress, both ladies and gentlemen, and very agreeable people, whom I met in Madrid.

I kept for you a copy of the second edition of *Smoke.* On my return to Paris, in a week, I think, I will leave it at your house, or, if you prefer, I will send it.

I brought with me my materials for work; but as one is never certain of having an hour to himself, I have accomplished nothing at all. I made a copy of a portrait of *Diana of Poitiers,* by Primatice. She is represented as Diana holding a quiver, and it is evident that she has posed, for

from head to foot everything shows the portrait. If I dare say so, there results even from an examination of the legs, that she wore her garters above the knee, after the fashion of the time. It is no longer the fashion now (so I have been told). I will show it to you, for this portrait has an historical value.

Good-bye. It is now the hour for dining. I envy you the little fish that you are eating, perhaps, at this very moment. Be so good as to tell me what is that high rock at Boulogne, near the quay. It seemed to me a monstrosity.

CCCX

PARIS, *September 2, 1868.*

While I was at Fontainebleau a strange incident happened to me. I had the idea of writing a novel for my hostess, whose hospitality I wished to repay in blarney. I did not have time to finish it; but on my return here I placed the word *End* on it, and I fear it will be considered too long deferred. The strange part of it, however, is, that no sooner had I finished, than I began another novel. The recrudescence of this malady of my youth alarms me, because it so resembles a second childhood. Nothing of all this, be it understood, is for the public.

While I was in the château we read some marvellous modern novels, the authors of which were utterly unknown to me. It is in imitation of these gentlemen that this last novel is written. The scene occurs in Lithuania, a country perfectly familiar to you. Pure Sanskrit is spoken there. A great lady of the land, having gone to hunt, had the misfortune to be captured and carried away by a bear destitute of feeling. She became insane, but gave birth to a well-formed boy, who grows up and becomes charming, only he is subject to gloomy moods and inexplicable whimsicalities. He is married, and on his wedding-night eats his wife alive. You, who know all the tricks, since I disclose them to you, will guess immediately why. Yes, this gentleman is the illegitimate son of that unlicked cub. *Che invenzione prelibata.** Please tell me, I pray you, what you think of it.

I am not doing any too well, and am urged to renew the compressed-air baths at Montpellier. If you do not return to Paris before the 1st of October, you will probably not find me there. I will leave you the novel *Smoke*, which I have had waiting for you for ages. I do not know what has become of the author. He

* This is the novel which was afterwards published under the title of Lokis.

was in Moscow recently, with gout, and a historical novel in the bargain.

I regret greatly not having visited the aquarium of which you tell me, when I passed through Boulogne. Nothing diverts me more than fish and sea flora.

I dined yesterday with Sainte-Beuve, who was very interesting. Although a great sufferer, he has a charming wit, and is, without doubt, one of the most agreeable conversationalists that I have ever heard. He is deeply alarmed at the progress made by the clericals, and takes the thing to heart. I think the danger does not come from that direction. . . .

Good-bye, dear friend. Write to me, but do not write so loosely as to put but three words on a line. Tell me candidly your opinion on my invention of the bear.

CCCXI

PARIS, *Tuesday, September 29, 1868.*

DEAR FRIEND: The important thing is that the reading did not tire you. Is it possible that you did not guess at once how ill-bred that bear was? As I read, I saw plainly on your face that you did not admit my conception of the plot. I must then submit to yours. Do you believe the

reader, who is less timorous than you, will accept this good-woman version, that it was a *glancé?* So, it was a mere glance of the bear which made this poor woman insane, and imparted to her son his sanguinary instincts? It shall be done as you wish. I have always been the better for your advice; but this time you have abused your privilege.

I shall leave for Montpellier next Saturday. I hope to say good-bye to you two or three times before then.

CCCXII

CANNES, *November 16, 1868.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have been, and am still, very ill. The compressed-air baths, which were so beneficial to me last spring, were powerless to cure a bronchial trouble which has succeeded my asthma, and is as harassing as the latter. For six weeks I have been coughing and choking; while the numerous drugs, which I take with much docility and resignation, do not produce sufficient effect to permit me to resume my ordinary course of life. I go out only on very warm days. I sleep badly, and spend my time entertaining the blue devils. . . . It is at night especially that I suffer and fret the most. If I

am so poorly before the winter, what will become of me when the weather is really cold? This thought preoccupies me unpleasantly. For three or four days, however, I have felt a little less miserable.

During my nights of insomnia I made a careful copy of the *Trouveur de Miel,** with the changes which you suggested, and which seem to me to improve the story. That the bear pushed his attacks to the point of marring an illustrious genealogy, remains doubtful. At the same time, intelligent persons like yourself will understand that a very serious accident must have occurred. I sent this new edition to M. Tourguenieff, that he might revise the local colour, concerning which I am in some perplexity, but the deuce of the thing is that neither he nor I have been able to find a single Lithuanian who knows his own language and country. I had some intention of sending this tale as a fête-day gift to the empress, but I have resisted the temptation, and have done wisely. God only knows what that bear would have become amidst the society at Compiègne.

The weather is only so-so—neither cold nor windy, but with very few really beautiful days. I have been here a fortnight. The rest of the

* Lokis.

time I have been at Montpellier, where I was horribly bored. . . .

So poor Rossini is dead. They pretended that he had done a great deal of work, although he wished to publish nothing. Pecuniary considerations, which always had great weight with him, would have been reason enough for him to publish his work, if he had really composed anything. He was one of the wittiest men I have ever seen, and nothing more marvellous has ever been heard than the air from the *Barber of Seville*, as sung by him. No actor could compare with him.

The last year appears to have been a fatal one for great men. They say that Lamartine and Berryer are both seriously ill.

Good-bye, dear friend. Write to me, and lose no time in leaving the damp country where you are at present. There is no such thing as a warm house in the country.

If you know some amusing book, tell me what it is, I pray you.

CCCXIII

CANNES, *January 2, 1869.*

DEAR FRIEND: You have not, then, received a letter I sent to you last month at P. I fear

that it has gone astray. I do not pretend, however, to justify myself altogether. If you only realised what a wretched and monotonous life I am leading, you would understand that it is hard enough to endure it without giving an account of it. The fact is, I am doing very badly. Not the least improvement! On the contrary, they have not even succeeded in giving me relief from the painful attacks which occur from time to time. The sky and sea are magnificent, and their influence, which formerly restored me to health, no longer has any effect. What must I do? I have no idea, but often I feel a great desire that it would end.

Your journey seems to me delightful, but I do not approve of your return through the Tyrol in the season you describe. You will meet with much snow; you will lose the skin from your cheeks, and you will see nothing remarkably beautiful. You had better take some other route, no matter which. Innspruck, or, rather, Innsbruck, is an exceedingly picturesque little town; but for one who has been to Switzerland, it is not worth the trouble of going out of one's way; neither are the bronze statues in the cathedral. Trent alone, of all the places on your route, seems to me worthy of your interest.

Why should you not go to Sicily to see

Etna, which is said to be at his pranks again? You are never sea-sick, and it is probable that boats leave Naples especially to view the spectacle. In about a week's journey you will have been able to see Etna, Palermo, and Syracuse.

I have again revised *The Bear*, whom you know, and I have polished him up with some care. Many things in the story are changed for the better, I think. The title and the names are changed also. For persons with as little intelligence as you, the manners of that bear will always seem to be mysterious. But no matter how perspicacious one may be, one will never be able to decide anything to his disadvantage. An infinity of things remain unexplained in the story. Physicians tell me that plantigrades, more than any other beasts, are capable of intercourse with human beings; but such examples are rare, naturally, bears being not exactly attractive. . . .

Where is the point of that discourse of M. de Nieuwerkerke mentioned in all the papers, and contradicted later? How stupid we are getting to be! Our progress in this is rapid. Did you have the curiosity to go to hear the discussion in the Hall of the Pré-aux-Clercs on marriage and heredity? They say that part of it was most amusing, and, on reflection, terrifying, when one

considers the number of imbeciles and mad dogs running the streets. I am told that there are women who make speeches, and who are neither the least mad, or the least stupid. Such symptoms as these make me shudder. The people of this land are voluntarily blind.

Good-bye, dear friend. I wish you a happy New Year.

CCCXIV

CANNES, *February 23, 1869.*

Do not be offended with me, dear friend, if I do not write to you. I have no encouraging news to give you of myself, and what is the advantage of sending you bad reports? The fact is, I am still dangerously ill, and I now realise that my malady is incurable. I have tried I know not how many infallible remedies; I have been in the hands of three or four physicians of great skill, not one of whom has given me the slightest relief. I am mistaken. Some time ago, in Nice, I came across an unusually intelligent man, somewhat of a charlatan, perhaps, who gave me, without pay, some capsules, which relieved me from a very painful feeling of suffocation which caused me great distress every night. Now, I suffer from it in the morning,

but with less violence, and the attacks do not last so long. As for the bronchitis, which is the obstinate feature of my disease, it is well established.

Suffering and sad as I am, I have not the strength to read, and I have, besides, hardly any books. These past days I have read with interest the *Mémoires d'un Paysan Écossais,* who by dint of intelligence and application became a man of letters, a professor of geology, and a celebrated man. Unfortunately, he cut his throat not long ago, hard work having, without doubt, affected his mind. Hugh Miller is his name.

I think you will find my *Bear* more presentable under his new form. Whenever I am able to paint I make illustrations for the story, so that when I return to Paris I may present it to the empress. Do not imagine that I am representing all the scenes—that one, for example, in which the bear forgets himself.

Good-bye, dear friend. I regret for your sake that you will not return to Rome this year. Everything, it seems to me, is going wrong. There is no longer any Spain; soon there will be no Holy See. The loss will be more or less serious according to one's point of view. But it is something which should be seen once (like

many other things), in order that one may suffer no temptations nor regrets. Good-bye. . . .

CCCXV

CANNES, *March 19, 1869.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have been very ill. I am now convalescent, very weak still, but out of all danger, so they tell me. It was an acute attack of bronchitis which aggravated my chronic bronchitis. For four or five days my life was in danger, but now I am up. I walk about in my room, and will be allowed soon to walk in the sunshine.

Good-bye, dear friend. Health and prosperity.

CCCXVI

CANNES, *April 23, 1869.*

DEAR FRIEND: I shall leave here day after to-morrow. I am in pretty poor plight, but I am obliged to leave this place. My cousin, in whose home I live, is dead, and his poor widow has no one with her. I am still very weak, but think I am able to endure the trip. I shall notify you as soon as I arrive, and hope to find you in good health. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCCXVII

PARIS, *Sunday, May 2, 1869.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have been in Paris several days, but I was so exhausted from the journey, and so ill, that I had not the courage to write to you. Come to see me, and console me. Good-bye.

CCCXVIII

PARIS, *May 4, 1869.*

I am distressed that you did not wait two minutes. You did not allow them to tell me, and contented yourself by returning my book, and this you call a visit to a sick man! Your charity was easily satisfied. But it does not count; besides, I am a little better, and need you to go to the Exposition with me, where I have no desire to see daubs and nudities.

You shall be my guide. Do you remember the time when I was yours? Tell me what day will suit you. Good-bye, dear friend.

CCCXIX

PARIS, *Saturday, June 12, 1869.*

DEAR FRIEND: This dull weather, with its alternations of heat and cold, worries me and

does me great harm; besides, I am in a beastly humour. The uproar that takes place every night on the boulevards, which reminds me of the fine times of 1848, contributes no little to my melancholy, and makes me feel, with Hamlet, that "man delights me not, nor woman neither."

What afflicts me the most in all this sad business, is its profound stupidity. This people, which calls itself, and believes that it is, the most intellectual on earth, expresses its desire to enjoy a Republican form of government by demolishing the stands where poor people sell newspapers. They shriek, *Vive la Lanterne!* and break the street-lamps. It is enough to make one hide his face. The danger is that there is for stupidity a sort of emulation, as for everything else, and between the Chambers and the Government, God only knows what the result will be.

I spend my time deciphering letters of the duke of Alba and of Philip II, which the empress gave me. Both of them wrote like cats. I am begining to read Philip II, easily enough; but his captain-general is still very troublesome. I have just read one of his letters to his august master, written a few days after the death of count Egmont, in which he pities the fate of the countess, who has not a loaf of bread left,

after having had a dowry of ten thousand florins. Philip II has an intricate and tedious way of saying the simplest things. It is very difficult to divine his meaning, and it seems to me that his constant intention is to confuse his reader and leave him to his own powers of initiation. The two make the most detestable pair of men that ever existed, and neither of them, unfortunately, was hanged, which is nothing to the credit of Providence.

I have also received from England a curious book, in which it is claimed that *Jeanne la Folle* was not mad, but heretical, and that, on this account, papa, mamma, her husband, and her son all concerted to keep her in prison, and from time to time, to have her suffer a taste of torture. You shall read it, if you like; the book is at your service.

I have nothing encouraging to tell you of my health, which is not flourishing; a little better, it may be, than before I came. Nevertheless, I cough constantly, and can neither eat nor sleep.

Good-bye, dear friend. Write to me soon.

CCCXX

PARIS, *June 29, 1869.*

Thanks for your letter, dear friend. I am furious with poets and their pretended temperate climates. There is no spring, there is not even any summer. To-day, I ventured out of doors, and came back shivering. When I think that there are people who go to the woods, and even talk of love in this bitter weather, I am tempted to exclaim at the miracle. I say to myself that it is done every day. I am mistaken; it is impossible; it has never been done, even in the past.

I have finished the history of Princess Tarakanof, who was a saucy baggage, but she had a lover whose letters will amuse you. He suffered the fate of many mortals. I hope the *Journal des Savants* penetrates as far as ——; if not, I will try to send it to you.

I am going, Thursday, to Saint Cloud, where I shall remain, probably, about a fortnight. I am not sure how I shall endure the life there, although I am, they tell me, almost the only guest invited. Besides, if I become ill I can in an hour be reinstated at my own fireside. I have told you something of the tribula-

tions that I suffer here in my home, so that I will confess to you, it is not without joy that I am going away. Since your departure I have had two or three most tiresome scenes.

I am reading, with the greatest difficulty, Renan's Saint Paul. Decidedly, he is a monomaniac as to scenery. Instead of sticking to his subject, he describes the woods and the meadows. If I were an abbé I should delight in writing an article for him to review. Have you read the harangue of our holy father, the Pope? . . .

I am confident that both in word and in deed we are about to be guilty of enormities for which there will not be enough baked apples in the world. Alas! this may end in harder projectiles! What a misfortune that the modern mind is so dull! Do you think it has ever been so before? There have been ages, doubtless, in which there were more ignorance, more barbarism, more absurdity, but now and then some brilliant genius appeared to make compensation; while to-day, it seems to me that all intellectuality is on a plane which is miserably low.

As I scarcely ever go out, I read a great deal. I have had sent me the works of Baudelaire, which have made me furious. Baudelaire was crazy! He died in a hospital, after having written some

verses which attracted the good opinion of Victor Hugo, and which possessed no other merit than that of being immoral. Now they are making him out to be a man of genius, who was misunderstood!

I saw yesterday an exquisite drawing of a marvellous fresco discovered in Pompeii. It appears to be a procession in honour of Cybele, to whom Hercules is making a visit. Standing before Cybele is a gentleman divested of modesty; some others are bearing a serpent with much pomp—a serpent coiled around a tree. I understand nothing of the subject. You saw in Pompeii the little temple of Isis; it was near this that the fresco in question was found.

Good-bye, dear friend. Write to me, in order that I may see you in passing. From now on for several days, you may address me at the Palace of Saint Cloud.

CCCXXI

PARIS, *Wednesday night, August 5, 1869.*

. . . I spent a month at Saint Cloud, in a passable condition of health. I was never perfectly well mornings and nights, but the days were not bad. The open-air life did me good, I think, and gave me a little strength. On my

return, Sunday, I had a most distressing attack of exhaustion, which continued two days. Then my physician at Cannes arrived, with a new remedy of his own invention, which cured me. They are eucalyptus tablets, and the eucalyptus is a tree native to Australia, which has been naturalized in Cannes. I am doing well, provided it lasts, as the man said while he was falling from a fourth-story window.

At Saint Cloud I read *The Bear* before a very select audience, among whom were several young ladies who understood nothing, it seemed to me; and, since it caused no offence, I have a desire to present the story to the *Revue*. Tell me your way of thinking thereon, and try to point out very clearly the pros and cons. You must not overlook the progress in hypocrisy which the age has made in late years. What will your friends say about it? Besides, one may as well write his stories for himself, for those that are written by others are not exactly interesting. . . . Are you not grieved for your holy mother, the Church, by the accident at Cracow? If one were to observe attentively, I am sure one would find that such things are occurring elsewhere. You must read the account of the affair in the *Times*. . . .

I dined, a few days ago, with the guileless

Isabelle. I found her better than I had expected. The husband, who is quite small, is a very polite gentleman, who made me many compliments, nor were they badly turned either. The prince of the Asturias is most affable, and has an intelligent expression. . . . He resembles ——, and also the children of Velasquez' time.

I am dreadfully bored. It is excessively hot at the Luxembourg, and all this matter of the Senate Council is anything but agreeable. They are going to open the establishment to the public, of which I disapprove strongly.*

Good-bye, dear friend. Write me something cheerful, for I am full of sadness. I have great need of your mirthsomeness and of your real presence.

CCCXXII

PARIS, *September 7, 1869.*

DEAR FRIEND: Do you expect to remain much longer at ——? Shall you not return here soon? While I have not as yet felt any sign of the approach of winter, I am beginning to look towards the South, for I have promised myself not to allow myself to be surprised by the cold. For several days I have been a little better,

* The sessions of the Senate were going to be public.

or, to speak more exactly, less ill. I have taken compressed-air baths, which have done me a little good, and I follow a new treatment which is tolerably successful. I am still solitary. I never go out at night, and see almost no one. By the help of all these precautions I am alive, or nearly so. Bülow succeeded in enticing me off.

At Saint Cloud the empress had me read *The Bear* (it is called *Lokis* now, which is bear in *Jmoude*) before some young girls, who, as I think I told you, understood nothing at all. This encourages me, and on the 15th of this month the thing will appear in the *Revue*. I have made several changes besides the names, and I wished to make still others, but my courage failed me. You will tell me what you think of it.

Yesterday we concluded our little matter.* I am uncertain as to the result. The respectable public is so hopelessly stupid, that what it formerly desired, now inspires it with fear. I have a suspicion that the bourgeois, who voted for M. Ferry a few months ago, now think that before some days in June, more or less remote, he will find himself disarmed. His distinguishing characteristic is never to be satisfied, with his own achievements especially.

* Adoption of the plan of the Senate Council, session of September 6, 1869.

The emperor's illness is not serious, but it may be tedious, and there may be a return of it. It is said, and I am inclined to believe it, that the great journey to the Orient will be countermanded; possibly the strained relations existing between the sultan and the viceroy are considered of sufficient importance to wreck the plans for the proposed excursion.

Have you read, in the *Journal des Savants,* the history of the princess Tarakanof? This is not new, however, and I believe I have shown you the proofs.

I have in mind to write, this winter, a *Life of Cervantes,* to serve as a preface to a new edition of *Don Quixote.* Has it been a long time since you have read *Don Quixote?* Does it still amuse you? Have you ever tried to explain why? I find it amusing, and yet I can give no valid reason; on the contrary, I can think of many things about the book which should prove that it is worthless; nevertheless, it is excellent. I should like to know your ideas on the subject. Do me the kindness to read over several chapters, and ask yourself these questions. I depend on you to do me this favour.

Good-bye. I hope the month will not pass without seeing you.

CCCXXIII

CANNES, *November 11, 1869.*

DEAR FRIEND: I am here in the most glorious weather imaginable, and the most persistently such; to the despair of the gardeners, who can not make their cabbages grow. I regret to see that I am hardly better than if the weather were bad. Mornings and evenings I have always very painful attacks of exhaustion. I can not walk without becoming tired and losing my breath; in fact, I am still good for nothing and miserable.

Besides, I have had some serious worries. P., whom I brought with me, became suddenly so sullen and impertinent, that I was compelled to discharge her. You may imagine that to lose a servant who has been with you for forty years is not an agreeable thing. Fortunately, she soon repented, and begged my pardon with such persistence that I had a sufficiently good excuse to yield, and keep her. It is so difficult nowadays to find a reliable servant, and P. has many excellent qualities, which it would have been impossible for me to replace. I hope the anger and firmness which I showed, and of which, between ourselves, I scarcely thought myself capable, will

The house at Cannes, France, in which Mérimée died, September 23, 1870.

Etched from a recent drawing.

CCCXXIII

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have a salutary effect in the future, and prevent any return of such episodes.

I dined yesterday in Nice with M. Thiers, who is much changed physically since the death of Madame Dosne, but not at all mentally, it seemed to me. His mother-in-law was the soul of his home. She it was who made a salon for him, attracted to it desirable people, and understood how to be agreeable both to political and other guests. In short, she reigned in a court composed of heterogeneous elements, and had the skill to turn them all to the profit of M. Thiers. A life of solitude has now begun for him; his wife will take part in nothing.

Politically, I found Thiers even more changed. Seeing the unbounded folly that has taken possession of this land, he has once more become reasonable, and is preparing to combat it, as he did in 1849. I fear that he overestimates his strength. It is much easier to burst the goat-skin bottles of Æolus than to mend them again and make them air-tight. It seems to me probable that we shall have a struggle; the chassepot rifle is invincible, and will give the populace of Paris a historic lesson, as general Changarnier said. Still, is there any assurance that it will serve its purpose? and, if it should serve its purpose, what will happen? The officials of the

government have become impossible; and the parliamentary government, insincere, dishonest, and devoid of capable men, seems to me no less impossible. In fact, to me the future, and I might say the present, is as gloomy as it is possible to be.

Good-bye, dear friend. Take good care of yourself, and write to me.

CCCXXIV

CANNES, *January 6, 1870.*

DEAR FRIEND: I thank you for your letter, and for your good wishes. I did not reply at once, because I did not have the physical strength. The cold weather, which has come upon us suddenly, is very severe, and has done me a great deal of harm. I feel a little better to-day, and take advantage of it to write to you. I am deeply discouraged; nothing does me any good. I try all the remedies, and find myself again back at the point from which I started; after a few days of relief, the disease manifests itself again as forcibly as ever. I sleep wretchedly, and with the greatest difficulty.

Not only do I not eat, but all kinds of nourishment inspire in me a feeling of disgust. Nearly all day I suffer frightfully, sometimes

accompanied with spasms of pain. I read with great difficulty, and frequently do not understand the words under my eyes. I have an idea of something which I should like to put into a work, but how is it possible to write in the midst of these troubles! So you see, dear friend, the situation in which I find myself. I have the certainty that a slow and painful death is to be my fate. I must become reconciled to it.

The political situation, of which I understand nothing at all, is not calculated to offer me an agreeable distraction. It seems to me that we are marching on to a revolution, which will be more disastrous than the one through which we passed so blithesomely twenty years ago. I should like the performance to be delayed a little while, so that I may not attend it.

It froze here at six degrees, a phenomenon which has not occurred since 1821, so say the oldest inhabitants; all the gardens have been ruined. The cold snap came just when one might have supposed it to be midsummer; the season was advanced, and everything in bloom. It was lamentable to see great, beautiful plants, full of blossoms, from seven to eight feet tall in the evening, in one night reduced to the consistency of spinach.

Good-bye, dear friend. Keep well, and let

me sometimes hear from you. I wish you a happy New Year. . . .

CCCXXV

CANNES, *February 10, 1870.*

DEAR FRIEND: If I have not written to you for a long time, it is because I have had nothing but sad things to tell you of myself. I am more and more ailing, and the life I lead is truly miserable. I sleep hardly at all, and suffer nearly all the time I am awake. Besides, the winter has been a frightful one. All the lovely flowers which made the glory of the country have been destroyed, many of the orange-trees have been frozen, and not enough flowers are left to make you any pomade. Imagine the effect produced on a being nervous as I, by rain, hail, and cold. One suffers here ten times more from all these than he would in Paris.

So, then, you have had an insurrection, which was as silly as the hero * who was its instigator. We present a melancholy spectacle of ourselves, by the fashion in which we make use of our liberty and of parliamentary government. It is impossible not to be struck by the really laughable audacity with which propositions of the most

* Victor Noir.

monstrous kind are presented and maintained in the Chambers, which no one would dare to utter in a salon. This representative government is a comedy which one can hardly call amusing. Everybody in it lies with effrontery, and nevertheless, every one lets himself be taken in by the most skilful liar. There are persons who consider Crémieux eloquent, and think that Rochefort is a worthy citizen. We were certainly stupid enough in 1848, but we are even more so to-day.

I am making the experiment of using a paper of English manufacture, and do not know whether you will be able to read what I write. I have just translated for the *Revue* a novel by Tourguenieff, which will appear next month. I am writing for myself, and perhaps for you, a little story in which the situation is largely one of love.

Good-bye. I wish you health and prosperity.

CCCXXVI

CANNES, *April 7, 1870.*

I have not written before, because I had only bad news to give you. I have been constantly, if not ill, at any rate in pain. I am still so. I am distressingly weak, and I am unable to

walk a hundred steps from my home without sitting down several times to rest. Frequently, especially in the night, I have attacks of excruciating pain, which last a long time. "Nerves!" they tell me. Now, medicine, as you know, is almost ineffectual when it is a question of nerves.

Last Monday, wishing to make an experiment and find out if I could stand the journey to Paris, I went to Nice, and made a few calls. I thought at one time that I should be guilty of the indiscretion of dying in the home of a person whom I did not know intimately enough to take that liberty with. I returned here in a bad condition, and spent twenty-four hours in a state of suffocation.

Yesterday I was a little better. I went out and walked along the sea-shore, followed by a folding-chair on which I sat down every ten steps. Such is my life. I hope by the end of the month to be able to start for Paris. Will it be possible? I often wonder if I shall be strong enough to climb my stairway. You, who know so many things, do you know of some apartment in which I might put away my books and myself, without climbing many steps? I should not care to be too far away from the Institute.

I received a letter, very well turned, from

M. Émile Ollivier, soliciting my vote.* I replied to him that I was no longer of this world. I think he will be elected without opposition.

How right you are in your judgment that we have gone mad! The clumsy assertion that to consult the people concerning the constitution is to create a despotism, is proof sufficient of what false metal it is cast! But the saddest of all is that no one is revolted by such absurdity. In reality, we are living in a period when there is no longer such a thing as ridicule or absurdity. Anything is said and anything is printed without shame.

I do not know when the review of Cervantes will appear; it will precede a splendid and beautiful edition of *Don Quixote,* which I will make you read one of these days. As for the story which I mentioned to you I shall reserve it to come out with my posthumous works. Still, if you wish to read it in manuscript, you may have this pleasure, which will take a quarter of an hour.

Good-bye, dear friend. Take good care of yourself. Health is the best of possessions. I shall not stir from here before the end of April. I expect to find you in Paris. Again good-bye.

* For the French Academy.

CCCXXVII

CANNES, *May 15, 1870.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have been very ill, and am still. I have been allowed only the last few days to venture out of doors. I am horribly weak, yet am encouraged to hope that by the end of next week I may start on my journey. I shall return, probably, by easy stages, for I could not endure twenty-four hours of steady railroad travel.

My health is irrevocably ruined. I can not yet accustom myself to this life of privation and suffering, but whether I am resigned or not, I am condemned to it. I wish I might at least find distraction in occupation; but, in order to work, I need to have an amount of strength which is lacking. I envy greatly some of my friends who have been enabled to depart this life suddenly, with no suffering, and with none of the vexatious warnings that come to me day by day.

The political turmoil of which you speak has penetrated also to this little corner of the earth. I have seen here plainly instances of the ignorance and stupidity of men. I am convinced that very few voters have any conception

of what they are doing. The Reds, who are in the majority here, have persuaded the imbeciles, who are even more numerous, that the matter at stake is the establishment of new taxes. Anyway, the result was fortunate.* "It is well cut out; now it is a question of sewing," as Catherine de Medici said to Henry III. Unfortunately, I can see in this land of ours, just now, scarcely any one who is skilful in the use of the needle.

What do you think of my friend M. Thiers, who, after the experience of the banquets of 1848, has resumed the same tactics? It is said that magpies are never caught, twice running, with the same snare; but men, and men of intelligence, are more easily snared.

I am thinking of giving up my lodging, and I should like to find one nearer the ground, and in your quarter. Can you give me any information and any suggestions on this subject? . . .

Nothing could be more beautiful than the country about here at this season. Flowers abound everywhere in such profusion, and of such beauty, that verdure in the landscape is exceptional. Good-bye.

* The vote of the plebiscite.

CCCXXVIII

PARIS, *June 26, 1870.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have been ill for a month. It is impossible for me to do anything, even read. I am a great sufferer, and have little hope. This may endure, perhaps, a long time.

I have put one of the shelves of my library in order, and am keeping for you the *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné*, in twelve volumes, and a small Shakespeare. When you return to Paris I will send them to you. I thank you for thinking of me.

CCCXXIX

PARIS, *July 18, 1870.*

DEAR FRIEND: I have been, and am still, very ill. For six weeks I have been unable to leave my room, and almost my bed. This is the third or fourth attack of bronchitis I have had since the beginning of the year. This promises nothing good for the approaching winter. When the heat of summer offers me no protection against colds, how will it be when winter comes?

I think that one must needs be admirably

well, and have nerves of singular vigour, not to be too deeply affected by the events of to-day. I need not tell you how I feel. I am among those who believe that the thing could not be avoided.* The explosion might have been retarded, perhaps, but it was impossible to avert it altogether. Here, war is more popular than it has ever been, even among the bourgeois. There is a great deal of mouthing, which is assuredly unfortunate; but men are volunteering, and money is being subscribed, which is the essential point. Military men are full of confidence, but when one considers that the whole future hangs on the chance of a bullet or a ball, it is difficult to share that confidence.

Good-bye for the present, dear friend. I am already fatigued from writing you these two little pages. I am ailing to the last degree; still my physicians say that I am better, but I can not perceive it. I have not sent the books to your house, fearing there might be no one there to receive them.

Good-bye once more. I kiss you from my heart.

*The war with Prussia.

CCCXXX

PARIS, *Tuesday, August 9, 1870.*

DEAR FRIEND: I think it would be well for you not to come to Paris just now. I fear that in a little while there will be some lamentable scenes here. The streets are full of downcast, discouraged people, and drunken men singing the "Marseillaise." Great disorder prevails. The army has been, and is, admirable, but is seems that we have no generals. All may still be repaired; but, for that, a miracle would be necessary.

I am no worse, only overwhelmed by the situation. I am writing to you from the Luxembourg, where we do nothing but exchange hopes and fears. Give me some news of yourself. Good-bye.

CCCXXXI

PARIS, *August 29, 1870.*

DEAR FRIEND: I thank you for your letter. I am still very ill and nervous. One would be so with less cause. The situation looks black to me. For a few days, however, it has mended slightly. The military men manifest confidence. The soldiers and the militia are fighting perfectly together; it appears that the army of

Maréchal Bazaine has accomplished prodigies of valour, although it has always fought one against three. Now, to-morrow, perhaps to-day, another great battle is looked for. These last engagements have been frightful. The Prussians conduct war by hand-to-hand fighting. Until the present, this method has been successful for them, but it seems that near Metz the carnage was such as to give them cause for reflection. It is said that the young ladies of Berlin have lost all their partners in the dance. If we could escort the rest back to the frontier,—or bury them here, which would be better—we should not have reached the limit of our troubles. This terrible butchery, we must not deceive ourselves, is but the prologue to a tragedy of which the devil alone knows the catastrophe. A nation is not shaken like ours has been without suffering for it. It is inconceivable that from our victory, as from our defeat, a revolution will not come. All the blood which has been shed, or which will be shed, is to the profit of the Republic—that is, of organised disorder.

Good-bye, dear friend. Remain at P.; there you are safe. We are still very calm here, awaiting with great composure the arrival of the Prussians; but the devil will not be the loser thereby. Again good-bye. . . .

CCCXXXII

CANNES, *September 23, 1870.**

DEAR FRIEND: I am very ill—so ill, that it is a difficult matter to write. There is a slight improvement. I will write to you soon, I hope, more in detail. Send to my house in Paris, for the *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné*, and a Shakespeare. I should have had them taken to you, but I went away. Good-bye. I embrace you.

* Last letter, written two hours before his death.

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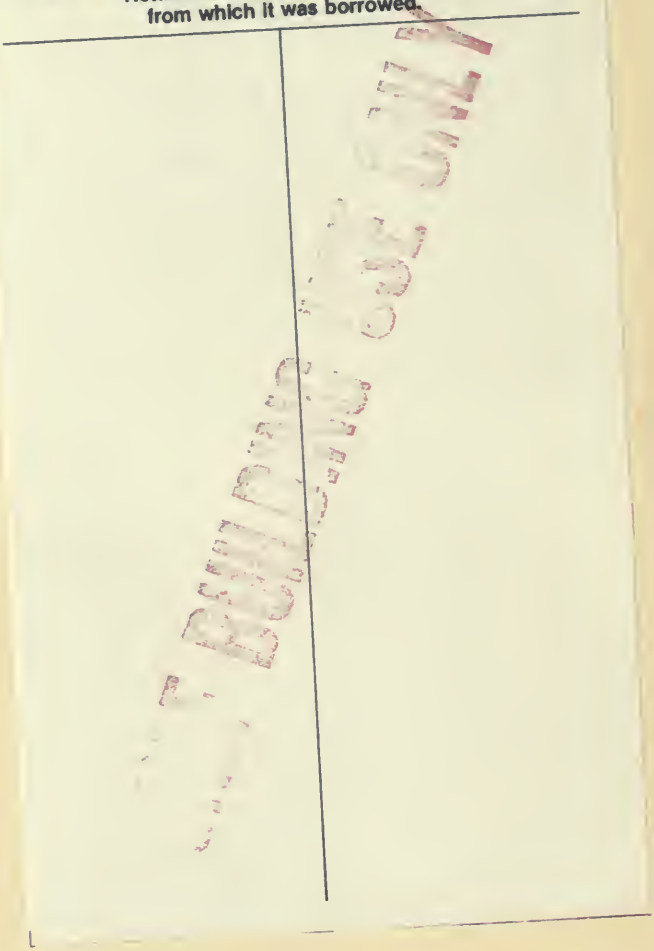

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